THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE GREEN-ROOM:

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THE

SECRET HISTORY

OF THE

GREEN-ROOM:

CONTAINING

AUTHENTIC AND ENTERTAINING MEMOIRS

OF THE

ACTORS AND ACTRESSES

IN THE

THREE THEATRES ROYAL.

A NEW EDITION WITH IMPROVEMETS.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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SECRET HISTORY

OF THE

GREEN-ROOM.

Mr. WILLIAM LEWIS.

COVENT-GARDEN.

IF we look into the London Theatres we shall find, that the majority of eminent Actors and Actresses have sprung up to their present elevation from the lowest Strolling Companies, by the mere dint of merit and application. Mrs. Siddons, Mrs. Jordan, Miss Farren, Mr. King, Mr. Kemble, and many others, may be adduced as instances. They have all been in *Provincial Corps*, their talents lightly esteemed in infancy, and themselves frequently in the utmost distress.

Genius in the Theatric World does not often meet sudden reward, but is generally ripened by gradual encouragement. However excellent a Performer's latent powers may be, very few have displayed accomplishments above mediocrity in a first attempt; and although a London Audience is the most indulgent in the world, yet they will not follow an Actor who is not possessed of very extraordinary abilities, with great professional accomplishments. The Managers are, therefore, obliged to put their noviciates on the shelf, and deprive them of the opportunities of the requisite practice for perfection; and although they may gradually improve, yet it is generally by slow degrees, or some sudden burst of genius, that a Performer establishes a reputation in London.

The Gentleman before us is indebted to great natural talents, and a close application to them, for his present professional rank, which is deservedly very high.

The father of Mr. WILLIAM LEWIS was son of the Dean of St. David's, and had served an apprenticeship to a Linen-Draper in London; but when WILLIAM was born, in

in March, 1746, his parents were at the head of a Travelling Company, in which he first made his appearance at Shrewsbury, at a very early age. At that time he squinted, and spoke remarkably fast; two defects which time and care obviated. Soon after this, his father and uncle purchased a Company of the late Mr. LOVE, at Newry, in Ireland; where our young hero had every opportunity and encouragement to unfold his powers, which promised well, from the vast flow of spirits and vivacity he discovered; but the death of his father throwing the management of the Company into the hands of a Mr. DAWSON, who seven months after married Mrs. LEWIS, he very suddenly experienced the frowns of fortune—for the whole Corps was disbanded.

The dawning excellence of Mr. WILLIAM LEWIS had not, however, passed unnoticed; and when only fourteen years of age, he was engaged by Mr. DIGGES, for Edinburgh, where his performance of *Master Simple*, to LOVE's *Falstaff*, in *the Merry Wives of Windsor*, strongly recommended him to the favour of the town. This Company (in which were Mr. and Mrs. DAWSON, and Mr. LEWIS, brother

to the father of our rising genius) proceeded from Edinburgh to Whitehaven, where he likewise gave great satisfaction in most of the parts which his youth permitted him to personate.

Mr. Dawson went soon after back again, with his wife and son-in-law, to Dublin, with a determination to attempt the capital at once. No Act of Parliament prohibited his design, and he fitted up a very elegant Theatre in Capel-Street, Dublin, where, principally by the abilities of young Lewis, he accumulated a handsome sum, and became a formidable rival to the more established Theatres.

Mr. Lewis had here a judicious and favourable audience, who admired the versatility of his talents, and the sprightliness of his humour; and whose warm approbation nourished and brought forward his powers, during a service of several years. The God of Love at length thought proper to try those passions, in a *real* amour, which had appeared so natural in *fiction*, and smote him to the heart with the brilliant beauties of a Miss Leeson, who had just arrived from Eng-

England, under the tuition of Mr. MACKLIN. The Lady being equally pleased with the person and address of her Theatric Lover, they were afterwards married.

Soon after the *West Indian* had made its appearance in London, Mr. DAWSON brought it forward with all possible expedition in Dublin, and gave the part of *Belcour* to the subject of these Memoirs, who pourtrayed the giddy amorous youth with great animation and humour. Mr. CUMBERLAND, the Author of the Comedy, while on a visit to his father in Ireland, went to see his bantling exhibited in Capel-Street, and was so delighted with Mr. LEWIS, that he complimented him, by saying, he was the VERY *Belcour* he had an idea of when he wrote the piece. This Gentleman, on his return to England, recommended him strongly to the Managers of Covent-Garden Theatre, where he was soon after engaged, and where his exertions proved him highly deserving the distinction he had met with.

During his first career in London, he was equally celebrated in Comedy and Tragedy, though his forte evidently lay in the former.

About the year 1781, Mr. HULL, finding the employment of Manager extremely troublesome, resigned it, and Mr. HARRIS requested the late Mr. HENDERSON to succeed him; upon whose refusal he offered it to Mr. LEWIS, as the next in theatric rank, and he accepted of it.

In this capacity it is, perhaps, impossible not to incur some dislike among the Performers, who regard his power with jealousy and envy; but his exertions for the public entertainment have been always crowned, as they justly deserve, with approbation.

No Actor possesses more ease and vivacity on the Stage than this Gentleman, or can better excite risibility. *Pert* or *outré* Comedy is his *chef d'œuvre*; though he has often appeared in serious and tragic characters with some credit, but has now judiciously given them up for his proper sphere, and to attend more closely to the business of the Theatre. In *Mercutio*, and the *Copper Captain*, he is yet unrivalled; and it is doubtful whether he was ever excelled in those parts, which he represents in such perfection, that the most fastidious Critic cannot point out a single error or defect.

The

The sprightliness, spirit, and propriety of his manner, catch the attention, and fill the imagination of his audience with the geunine ideas of the Author. In *Ranger*, *Belcour*, *Tom*, in the *Conscious Lovers*, and various other genteel, sprightly, or foppiſh parts, he is a distinguished favourite.

Mr. Lewis, by the emoluments arising from his profession, not only supports himself and family handsomely, but, it is said, very wisely reserves a part of his income against future contingencies, or for the benefit of his young offspring.

POETICAL CHARACTER.

For sprightly parts of higher life design'd,
Where fashion's airy whims delude the mind,
Where homely Reason yields to polish'd Pride,
And Nature's vulgar feelings are decry'd,
Lewis, with lively taste and easy mien,
Gives gay precision to the comic scene:
When wounded Pride with quick resentment glows,
The well-bred rage he elegantly shews;
And, to whate'er excess the fury reigns,
He still the Gentleman through all sustains.
If proof be claim'd—observe his *Racket* well,
Which few will equal, none can e'er excell.

In Tragedy—alas! how few content
With powers that wiser Nature kindly lent!
From her safe easy path ne'er turn aside,
To climb the dang'rous precipice of Pride!
In Tragedy, a wild unmeaning stare,
A flippant affectation in his air,
A rapid utterance that mangles sense,
And deadens pathos, take off all pretence
To the chaste rules of Nature's nobler plan,
Burlesque the hero, and deform the man.

Mrs. SIDDONS.

DRURY-LANE.

Established habits are with difficulty removed. When the human mind once usurps the possession of a certain train of ideas, it generally retains its bias, and they continue to flow on, in the channel of prejudice, with little interruption from the feeble efforts of liberality and candour. Mankind in general deprecate the toil of reasoning; the portion of those who think for themselves is comparatively very small. The multitude are content to *adopt* without discussion, and consequently to approve without judgment, and censure without reason.

There is a certain degree of ridicule attached to the profession of a Player, that the mind seems incapable of resisting; and which, all the powers even of Garrick, Mrs. Jor-

DAN, or Mrs. SIDDONS, cannot *altogether* remove. In darker ages, Actors have been considered as the foes of Religion, and condemned by the anathemas of the Church. The liberality of the present has removed every obstacle of this sort, and even honoured some of its professors with marks of distinction, the more honourable as they are more rare.

The mother of Mrs. SIDDONS was the daughter of a Mr. WARD, the Manager of an Itinerant Company of Players in Wales, and the adjacent English Counties, who by success and economy made a small fortune. The present Earl of COVENTRY, then a youth, is said to have been so much struck with her charms, that he sent her letters, with an offer of marriage; which she gave to her father, and the father to the late Earl, by which means it was prevented.

So great it seems was Mr. WARD's contempt for his profession, that he laid his daughter under the strongest injunction of never marrying a man on the Stage; but weak are parental counsels in opposition to the power of the *fecundating* little God.—The first sight of Mr. ROGER KEMBLE, who travelled

velled in the Company in the character of Hairdresser, so wrought upon the susceptible heart of Miss WARD, that before it was known they loved, they were secretly married. Papa was outrageous, and it only remained for Mr. and Mrs. KEMBLE to enter a Strolling Company in Cheshire and Lancashire. Here the present Mrs. SIDDONS was born. Parents sometimes relent.---The pride of the Mimic Monarch gave way to the feelings of Nature. After a few years peregrination, they were invited back by Mr. WARD, who resigned the Theatric Sceptre to Mr. KEMBLE, and died soon after.

When Miss SARAH KEMBLE, (now Mrs. SIDDONS) first attempted the Stage, her juvenile efforts, particularly as a Singer, were regarded with some hopes of success; but she very early abandoned that line, and attended in particular to Tragedy.

The vicissitudes of all human affairs are well represented in theatric life. Here we see monarchs suddenly dethroned, and succeeded by the most menial offices. Miss KEMBLE being refused the indulgence of her passion for Mr. SIDDONS, actually resigned her situation, and hired herself as Lady's Maid

to

to Mrs. GREATHEAD, of Guy's Cliffe, in Warwickshire, at 10l. per annum.

At the end of a twelvemonth, however, those two powerful passions—Love and Ambition---would be restrained no longer. Mr. SIDDONS eloped with her to Chamberlain, and joined CRUMP's Company, where he married her.

This was a newly established Company, and rather unsuccessful: and such was the poverty of their wardrobe, that Mrs. SIDDONS was obliged, during the performance of the *Irish Widow*, to borrow a coat of a Gentleman in the boxes, to equip herself for the *Widow Brady*, which she obtained on condition that she gave him her petticoat to put over his shoulders, and admitted him to stand behind the scenes.

Mrs. SIDDONS's talents were, even at this period, allowed to surpass mediocrity, and her application was incessant. From hence she was engaged, with her husband, by the late Mr. YOUNGER, to perform at Liverpool, Birmingham, &c. where, after remaining a few years, encreasing both her profits and reputation, she was invited to Drury-Lane, where she

she performed the parts of *Mrs. Strickland*, and the *Queen* in *Richard III.* but being considered only as a second-rate Actress on a London Theatre, her stay was very short. Some have imputed this to GARRICK's jealousy of all merit but his own; but the supposition does too much violence to common sense, to be admitted for a moment.

From London Mrs. SIDDONS went to Bath, without much hope, it is presumed, of ever reaching any very pre-eminent station; but extreme parsimony enabled her to support her family on a very small salary. Here, she evidently improved. About the year 1780, she had attained that degree of excellence, that many *amateurs* travelled to Bath purposely to see her.

In 1781, Mrs. SIDDONS had the honour of numbering, among her patrons, the Duchess of DEVONSHIRE, and Mr. WHALEY the Poet, whose admiration of her abilities obtained her an engagement at Drury-Lane Theatre, at 10l. per week; upon which she left Bath, after speaking a very pretty address, written by herself, and in which she produced her

her three children, as the three reasons for her quitting such generous patrons.

Her second appearance at Drury-Lane was on the 10th of October, 1782, in the character of *Isabella*. This is her greatest character, and she certainly astonished the house, by a display of powers unwitnessed since the days of GARRICK.

Her fame was instantly sounded through the metropolis with superlative eulogium. The Theatre overflowed every night she appeared, and MELPOMENE, who had been pushed behind the curtain by the satire of SHERIDAN'S *Critic*, resumed her former consequence and station. It became fashionable for all the Ladies to weep, and sometimes to faint. The sums drawn into the Treasury exceeded the receipts of any former season, and the Managers, by way of return, gave her an extra benefit, and doubled her salary.

Anxious that her relations might participate in her good fortune, Mrs. SIDDONS brought her sister, Miss F. KEMBLE, to London, and announced her for *Alicia*, to her own *Jane Shore*. It is impossible to describe the eagerness with which crowds flocked to see this per-

performance. Judging of Miss KEMBLE by the talents of her sister, the Public expected another phenomenon, and the avenues to the Theatre were gorged with people by three o'clock. The screams of women, and the general confusion which ensued when the doors opened, occasioned a very unpleasant scene. Many were lamed, many had their pockets picked, and thousands were excluded the house. But they had no reason to regret this disappointment, as the new *Alicia* was even below mediocrity. Miss KEMBLE remained but a few seasons on the Stage, when she married Mr. TWISS, a Gentleman of fortune, and some literary ability, with whom she retired.

The Managers of Drury-Lane, willing to compliment and reward a woman whose powers proved profitable as the philosopher's stone, gave Mrs. SIDDONS a benefit before Christmas. *Venice Preserved* was selected for the play: and a more splendid or crowded audience, perhaps, never graced a theatre. Great part of the Pit was laid into Boxes; the presents given for tickets by the Nobility and Gentry were immense; and Counsellors

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PIGOTT and FIELDING began a subscription among the Gentlemen of the Bar, which amounted to an hundred guineas, and presented it to Mrs. SIDDONS, as a small acknowledgment for the pleasure and instruction her talents had given them; to the former of whom Mrs. SIDDONS sent the following letter, of which we have procured a Copy:

"SIR,

"I cannot suppress my desire of wishing you to take upon you the charge of making my most grateful acknowledgments to those Gentlemen who have done me the honour of distinguishing my poor abilities in so elegant a manner. Believe me, Sir, my heart is too full, and my pen too feeble, to say what would become me on this most shining circumstance of my whole life. The Gentlemen of the Bar have given me a consequence I never felt before, and I have just reason to fear the effects of the approbation of so eminent a Body. But in all things I will do my best to merit that most honourable distinction which my generous patrons have thought proper to shew me, and to prove myself at least

least not insensible of the value of their countenance and protection. I have the honour to be, with great respect and gratitude, Sir, your most obliged and obedient servant,

S. SIDDONS."

This was an honour unparalleled in theatrical annals; and indeed the benefit was, perhaps, the most lucrative ever known.

In the Summer she performed in Ireland; and her first appearance at Drury-Lane, in September 1783, was commanded by Their MAJESTIES. Besides an uncommon share of Royal countenance, she proved equally attractive this season as the preceding. When the vacation again came round, she again went to Ireland, and from thence to Edinburgh, where she received one thousand pounds for performing ten nights. Her fame having circulated throughout the kingdom, induced many to travel from the most distant parts of it to see her; and such was the effect of her representations, that innumerable presents of different kinds were sent to her from unknown hands; but the most magnificent was a silver urn, which was conveyed to her after

after she arrived in London, with the words "*A Reward to Merit,*" engraven on it.

During all this sun-shine of good fortune, however, a storm was brewing in the metropolis. The envy of a competitor may be forgiven:—but what can be said in defence of those who repine at the success of the meritorious, without the excuse of rivalship? It is a crime of the blackest and most unpardonable nature.

A person employed in a newspaper, whose writings have been justly described to be "*every line a libel, and every word a lie,*" because, perhaps, Mrs. SIDDONS would not comply with his extortions, or sooth his viperous tongue by the hospitalities of her table, set every engine in motion against her. He loaded her with opprobium for not alleviating the distresses of her sister, Mrs. CURTIS, a vicious woman, who would not conform to modesty, though offered a genteel annuity on that condition. This Lady read lectures in Dr. GRAHAM's *Temple of Health,* at which decency would have blushed: and notwithstanding she disgraced her relations in many respects, she expected their countenance

nance and support. With a view of forcing them to accede to her demands, from the dread of public indignation, she swallowed poison in Westminster Abbey, which probably had the desired effect, as without proving mortal, it furnished a subject of detraction against her sister.

The paragraphical assassin, in addition to the preceding circumstance, represented Mrs. SIDDONS as extremely avaricious and uncharitable:---that she had taken a large sum from Mr. DIGGES, a once eminent, but then distressed Comedian, for performing on his benefit night in Dublin:---that she had been guilty of a similar crime to Mr. BRERETON: and that her whole conduct was replete with meanness and inhumanity. To irritate his newspaper brethren, too, he reported that she never read their publications, and equally despised their panegyric or their censure; until by invidious falsehoods, industriously circulated, honest *John Bull* was very clamorous against his favourite actress; and many candid people credited these assertions, while they remained uncontroverted.

The

The house was crowded on the night of her first appearance in October, 1784: but when the curtain drew up and discovered her as *Mrs. Beverley*, in the *Gamester*, she was saluted with violent hissing, and a cry of *off! off!* intermixed with applause. She attempted to speak, but could not be heard; and Mr. KEMBLE, indignant at the insults offered her, and conscious of her innocence, led her off the Stage.

This excited the vociferations of her friends for her return; and after the tumult had continued for about an hour, her enemies began to relax; and silence being obtained, she came forward---She declared her innocence of what she was accused with :---that the allegations would soon be refuted;---and that her respect for the Public made her confident they would protect her from insult. The Play was then suffered with very little opposition to go on.

During the whole of this riot Mrs. SIDDONS acted with great composure and fortitude. Her husband, in a spirited manner, proved the charges respecting DIGGES and BRERETON to be false; and some elegant, nervous

nervous letters, inserted in a newspaper, signed LAERTES, supposed to be written by Mr. KEMBLE, operated powerfully in her favour. But still the author of the disturbance was spreading his venom, and creating stories of her parsimony; while to his confidents he would whisper with great joy, "*You see what a noise I've made!*"

The conduct of Mrs. CURTIS sufficiently justified Mrs. SIDDONS's resentment; and Mr. BRERETON, by not coming forward in vindication of a woman to whom he was obliged, was generally blamed. The Public soon saw the infamy of the whole transaction, and received her with double kindness.

The authors of this malignant conspiracy, however, had nearly accomplished their design. The object of their enmity, disgusted at a public life so liable to be embittered by the mistake of the multitude, or the combinations of the mischievous, was on the eve of retiring into Wales, on a few thousand pounds which she had saved during the two preceding seasons;---nor was it until the exultations of her enemies at such an event were fully represented

presented to her, that she agreed to brave the storm.

Thus were the admirers of the Drama on the brink of losing its brightest ornament by the machinations of a villain and their own credulity. Justice, however, triumphed over malignity :---the temporary cloud of popular delusion suddenly dissipated, and our Heroine shone again with increased lustre. Theatrical amateurs, sensible of the injury she had sustained, were eager to shew their contrition, by the most frequent tokens of approbation; and she had more cause of rejoicing, than of regretting at the futile attempts on her fame.

Their MAJESTIES about this time paid her many compliments. She was frequently invited to Buckingham-House, and to Windsor, where she sometimes recited Plays, accompanied by Mr. KEMBLE; and for several years she had to boast of a greater share of Royal Patronage than any of her predecessors.

A great man was so much charmed with her, that a *Carte Blanche* was offered and rejected. This Mrs. SIDDONS told to some friends, which coming to the knowldge of a great

great lady, any further intimacy was declined; nor has the decree been yet revoked.

At the conclusion of the season of 1789, Mrs. SIDDONS finding her power of attraction on the wane, resolved on retiring from the London Stage, until by absence her abilities might regain their wonted allurements. She did not, however, retire from a theatrical life, but performed in Weymouth, Plymouth, Liverpool, &c. &c. where her profits were considerable, but where her superior talents have left an impression that will for a long time cause the exertions of the Itinerant Players to be received with coldness; and consequently abridge their small emoluments.

In the beginning of the Winter she visited her friend, Mr. WHALLEY, at Bath, where it was her design to perform for a few nights, but the regulations of that Theatre would not permit it. From thence she went to her worthy patrons, Lord and Lady HARCOURT, at Newnham, and resided there a few weeks; but on being seized with a very serious indisposition, she returned to her house in London.

By her emoluments arising from the Theatre

tre, and the numerous and valuable presents of the Nobility and Gentry, which she has received in all the principal towns in the three kingdoms, she has realized a handsome fortune. She keeps a carriage, and an elegant house in Great Marlborough-Street, and it is said that she has mortgages to a very large amount on Drury-Lane Theatre.

She is respected, and admitted on familiar terms by many noble families. From her infancy she has been remarkably prudent; nor has her most inveterate enemy ever suspected her continence. She is blessed with great domestic happiness; and her eldest son, Master H. SIDDONS, has lately shewn a pretty turn for Poetry; and what will, no doubt, be more gainful, the promise of very considerable excellence as an Actor. He has determined to adopt the profession of the family, and, while he conducts himself with their prudence, from his participation of their powers he is likely to do honour to the Stage, his relations, and himself.

We now come to an examen of the dramatic powers of Mrs. SIDDONS.—The merits of this

this Lady are so great, the success she met with so uncommon, and the attention paid her by the town so full of respect, that we should think ourselves deficient in the regard we owe our readers, if we were to speak of her in so short and desultory a manner as we necessarily have of many others in this Work.

It is a reiterated assertion among such as affect to despise what they call the mob, that the Public are occasionally seized with a kind of mania, and run in crowds while the frenzy lasts, predetermined to praise what they cannot comprehend. But this accusation is only true in part. The small talk of society, it is true, is always imitative; it affirms, but does not investigate; it sees, admires, and commends, not as reason, but, as fashion prescribes. It is the tongue of understanding however that gives the tone to the affirmations of folly, and whoever looks round, will easily perceive, that every man, in gradation, forms his opinions upon some one above him, whose judgment he has often experienced to be better than his own, and which he has therefore very rationally learned to revere. Fools cannot not bestow reputation; they are them-

selves despised, and their remarks, when false, would be heard only to be ridiculed. Whence we may conclude, when the praise is universal, the merit is real, and that those people who affect to contemn what all the world approves, have either erected a false standard of taste for themselves, or contradict for the sake of being singular. If this be true, as we are persuaded it is, the annals of the Theatre do not afford an instance of more universal approbation, consequently none of greater merit, than Mrs. SIDDONS. GARRICK himself did not exceed, if he equalled her, in awaking public curiosity. When he first appeared the Theatres were small if compared to the present, yet it is a known fact that the Boxes have been all engaged every night for a fortnight or more in advance, on those nights when it was supposed she would play, and this for a continuance, while the other parts of the house have as continually overflowed. Let us endeavour by developing her excellencies to account for these extraordinary marks of public favour.

There never perhaps was a better stage figure seen than Mrs. SIDDONS. Her height is above the middle size; she is not at all inclined

clined to the *embonpoint*, yet sufficiently muscular to prevent all appearances of asperity, or acute angles in the varieties of action, or the display of attitude; the symmetry of her person is captivating; her face is peculiarly happy, by having a strength of features without the least propensity to coarseness or vulgarity; on the contrary, it is so well harmonized when quiescent, and so expressive when impassioned, that most people think her more beautiful than she is. So great too is the flexibility of her countenance, that it takes the instantaneous transitions of passion, with such variety and effect, as never to tire the eye. Her voice is remarkably plaintive, yet capable of all that firmness and exertion which the intrepidity of fortitude, or the impulse of sudden rage demand. Her eye is large and marking, and her brow capable of contracting to disdain, or dilating with the emotions of sympathy or pity; her memory is tenacious, and her articulation clear, distinct, and penetrating.

That Nature might not be partially bountiful, she has endowed her with a quickness of conception, and a strength of understanding, equal to the proper use of such extra-

ordinary gifts. So entirely is she mistress of herself, so collected, and so determined in her gestures, tone, and manner, that she seldom errs like other Actors, because she doubts her powers or comprehension: she studies her Author attentively, conceives justly, and describes with a firm consciousness of propriety; she is sparing in her action; because Nature, (at least English Nature) does not act much, but it is proper, picturesque, graceful, and dignified; it arises immediately from the sentiments and feelings, and is not seen to prepare itself before it begins. No studied trick or start can be predicted, no forced tremulation, where the vaxancy of the eye declares the absence of passion, can be seen; no laborious strainings at false climax, in which the tired voice reiterates one high tone beyond which it cannot reach, can be heard; no artificial heavings of the breasts, so disgusting when the affectation is perceptible; none of those arts, by which the Actress is seen, and not the Character, can be found in Mrs. Siddons. So natural are her gradations and transitions, so classical and correct her speech and deportment, and so exceedingly affecting and pathetical are her voice, form, and features,

tures, that there is no conveying an idea of the pleasure she communicates by words. She must be seen to be admired. What is still more delightful, she is an original; she copies no one living or dead, but acts from Nature and herself.

This is general praise, let us take a more particular view of her powers in some of those characters in which she has so repeatedly charmed the town.

Her first appearance was in *Isabella* in the *Fatal Marriage*, a play in which one of our greatest poets has produced some of his most happy effusions. There is not perhaps in the range of Dramatic Writing a more difficult character to support with justice than that of ISABELLA. Her settled melancholy for the loss of BYRON, her distressful poverty, her sorrows at the cruelty of her incensed father-in-law, her maternal fears, and her reluctant acceptance of VILLEROY, may be represented by abilities inferior to those of Mrs. SIDDONS, though not with that fulness of effect; but the intervals of sanity and distraction that succeed, are so various, numerous, and perplexed, that nothing but the utmost efforts of genius and of art can exhibit ISABELLA in all

her thousand horrors. Any thing below excellence must be contemptible, and therefore it is with great justice that the critics have pronounced this to be her *chef d'œuvre*.—Great talents are always most conspicuous where great obstacles are to be surmounted.

If there be any who still affect to doubt the superiority of Mrs. SIDDONS, who still affirm, they remember to have seen some one more excellent, let them examine her ISABELLA, let them behold her looking at BIRON in disguise, let them listen to her soliloquy when he leaves her, let them hear her repeat

What's to be done?—for something must be done—
Two husbands! yet not one! by both enjoy'd,
And yet a wife to neither! hold my brain.—

And again,

I am contented to be miserable
But not this way, &c.

Let them observe during her progressions to madness, with what distinct shades sanity and reason are depicted, let them behold her phrenzy increase till she attempts to stab her husband,

husband, let them watch the inexpressible anguish of her looks, while she clings to his body when dead, let them view her in her last agonies give her laugh of horror, for having at last escaped from such inhuman persecutors and insupportable miseries, and then while their passions are warm, let them declare who is her equal.

In *Jane Shore* the same regard to propriety, to character, situation, and sentiment, is preserved. We have heard it affirmed, that she mistakes the first part of this character, that she is too full of grief, and exhibits too strong a picture of melancholy; but this was evidently a hasty and ill-formed criticism. GLOSTER and Lord HASTINGS before she appears describe her fully.

L. Hast.—I am to move your Highness in behalf
Of SHORE's unhappy wife.
Glost. Say you of SHORE.
L. Hast. Once a bright star that held her place on high,
The first and fairest of our English dames,
While royal EDWARD held the sovereign rule,
Now sunk in grief, and pining in despair;
Her waining form no longer shall incite

Envy in woman, or desire in man;
She never sees the sun but thro' her tears,
And wakes to sigh the live long night away.

Glost. Marry the times are badly chang'd with her,
From EDWARD's days to these: then all was jollity,
Feas'ing and mirth, light wantonness and laughter;
Piping and playing, minstrelsy and masquing,
Till life fled from us like an idle dream,
A shew of mummery without a meaning.

This quotation will prove how attentively Mrs. SIDDONS had studied her Author, when she gave rise to the above ill-judged decision, and every sentence in her first scene is a confirmation that she was right. The whole character is indeed little more than a penetentiary repetition of past crimes, as the source of present misfortunes, till the fourth Act, in which JANE SHORE is tempted by GLOSTER to betray King EDWARD's children, and we never beheld Mrs. SIDDONS in this scene without increasing admiration. From her performance of *Isabella* and *Belvidera*, we were convinced how powerfully she could inspire pity and terror, but her *Grecian Daughter* and *Jane Shore* convinced every be-

beholder how perfectly she was mistress of the sublime as well as of the pathetic. Never were gratitude, patriotism, and disregard of partial selfish feelings better conceived, or better expressed, than by Mrs. SIDDONS, after GLOSTER has told her that HASTINGS opposes those who wish to deprive the orphan prince of the crown, when she exclaims—

J. Sh.—Does he! does Hastings!
Glost.— Ay Hastings.
J. Sh. Reward him for the noble deed just Heaven,
For this one action guard him and distinguish him
With signal mercies and with great deliverance,
Save him from wrong adversity and shame;
Let never fading honours flourish round him
And consecrate his name even to time's end;
Let him know nothing else but good on earth,
And everlasting blessedness hereafter.

She does not, as we have seen others, stay to cast a look of contempt at GLOSTER, her whole soul is intent upon the generosity of HASTINGS, and her affection for her Prince; all other sensations are so totally absorbed, and these are poured forth in such a rapture

of dignified enthusiasm, that the spectator forgets, while she is speaking, the danger she incurs. There never was a GLOSTER but must appear insignificant by the side of Mrs. SIDDONS, notwithstanding all his threats, while she says,

Oh, that my tongue had every grace of speech,
Great and commanding as the breath of kings;
Sweet as the poet's numbers, and prevailing
As soft persuasion to a lovesick maid,
That I had art and eloquence divine,
To pay my duty to my master's ashes,
And plead till death the cause of injured innocence.

Her fortitude if possible increases, and becomes equal to the strongest exertions of the strongest mind, after GLOSTER's denunciation of vengeance, when she thus devotes herself to misery, rather than abandon her gratitude and loyalty.

Let me be branded for the public scorn,
Turn'd forth and driven to wander like a vagabond;
Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread
Upon the barren, wild, and desolate waste,
Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,

E'er

Ee'r I consent to teach my lips injustice,
Or wrong the orphan who has none to save him.

Her resignation is so perfect, so determined, and so sublime, her tone of voice so firm, yet free from rant, her action so unconsciously noble, and her deportment so void of all ostentatious self-applause, perceptible either in the Player as speaking well, or the Woman as acting with superiority, that we think we behold absolute perfection, both in the Actress and the Character. It is not the declamation of study, the display of attitudes, or the stride of assumed dignity, by which we are charmed, but those exact and forcible expressions of feeling that stamp reality on fiction, and make it no longer an imitation but a truth.

And here we cannot but recommend to those gentlemen who do at present, or hope hereafter to perform HASTINGS, (as well as those young ladies, who shall make similar attempts on JANE SHORE) to observe with the utmost degree of assiduity, by what means Mrs. SIDDONS excels in this scene. Did they do so, we surely should no longer see

see HASTINGS in a scene, equal, if not superior, with respect to writing and theatrical advantages, depend alone on the strength of his voice for applause; we should then see these Performers emulative only to give a superior energy of fortitude instead of vociferation. We should no longer consider them as Actors but as Heroes, when they say,

On this foundation will I build my fame,
And emulate the Greek and Roman name,
Think England's peace bought cheaply with my blood,
And die with pleasure for my country's good.

We have read in the Papers, that a deputation had been sent to Mrs. SIDDONS, requesting her to speak in a more enfeebled tone in the last scene of *Jane Shore*. Whether such deputation was or was not sent, is not our business to enquire; but as there is some justice in the criticism, we shall, for the entertainment of our Reader's curiosity, examine how far it is practicable in Stage Exhibition. That a woman emaciated with extreme hunger, and in the agonies of death, should be able to speak

speak so loud, we can readily allow to be almost impossible, and so it is that she should speak so much, or that she should continue to traverse the streets so immediately before she dies. But these seem rather to be among the necessary defects of imitation, in which fiction is obliged to allow its inferiority to fact, and in which the Poet and the Performer are at least to be excused if not justified, than of that kind that criticism, by discovering, may reform. Had JANE SHORE been shewn on the Stage as feeble and helpless as she actually was, when expiring for want of food, her words must have been few, her action none, and her voice not audible; but the Poet wanted to express her thoughts, and the Actress to be heard: to effect which, some improbabilities are perhaps inevitable. We will grant, however, that the weaker the voice, the more natural is the Player, provided she be entirely heard; but this is the first consideration, and to this every other must give place.

In the *Grecian Daughter* Mrs. SIDDONS displays the nobler passions in a still more eminent degree: the characteristic virtues of EUPHRASIA are fortitude and filial piety, and of

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of these she gives the strongest and most permanent picture. To cite every passage in which she is excellent, would be endless; but there are two in which she rises so much above expectation, that not to note them would be unjust. The first is when she supposes her father murdered by PHILOTAS.

And dost thou then, inhuman that thou art,
Advise a wretch like me to know repose?
This is my last abode—these caves, these rocks,
Shall ring for ever with *Euphrasia's* wrongs:
All Sicily shall hear me—Yonder deep,
Shall echo back an injured daughter's cause.
Here will I dwell, and rave, and shriek, and give
These scattered locks to all the passing winds;
Call on *Evander* lost, and pouring curses,
And cruel Gods and cruel stars invoking,
Stand on the cliff in madness and despair.

In the recitation of this speech, Mrs. SIDDONS is so perfectly what she describes, she raves and shrieks in accents so piercing and so loud, that the spectator supplies all the other circumstances: he imagines all Sicily actually hears her, and that he sees her standing on the cliff in madness and despair!

The

The other is in the fourth Act, where DIONYSIUS requires her to draw off her husband PHOCION and his powers from the siege; to which she replies,

Think'st thou then
So meanly of my *Phocion?* Dost thou deem him
Poorly wound up to a mere fit of valour
To melt away in a weak woman's tear?
Oh thou dost little know him.

Her manner of saying, *Oh thou dost little know him*, conveys so consummate an idea of an elevated mind, that every one who hears her is persuaded she is perfectly capable in real life of acting the part she here only personates, and they admire the Woman even more than the Actress. When we say every one, we would be understood to mean every one of those who are themselves susceptible of the like sentiments.

We shall pass over her agitation while she fears PHILOTAS has at last betrayed her father, and the manner of her stabbing the tyrant, as we must many more beauties, and make a few observations on her in the *Fair Penitent*.

Nothing,

Nothing, perhaps, gives more permanent satisfaction from Poet, Painter, or Player, than when they perfectly assume the *manners* of the persons they represent; and in this Mrs. SIDDONS is particularly happy. Her look, her step, her gestures, vary with the Character. In *Isabella*, her behaviour is meekness and resignation to unmerited misfortunes; in *Jane Shore*, lowliness and contrition for past offences; in the *Grecian Daughter*, that true dignity which a conscious strength of mind and rectitude of action naturally inspires, is every where prevalent; and in *Calista*, that haughty affectation of being above controul, which a deviation from virtue ever produces in a great but proud mind. She walks with greater precipitation, her gestures are more frequent and more violent, her eyes are restless and suspicious, pride and shame are struggling for superiority, and guilt is in the contraction of her brow. We think, however, that in her scene with HORATIO in the third Act, one night we saw her, she fell into an error by no means usual with her; she discovered too much rage in the first part of the scene, and thus formed an anticlimax: but perhaps

perhaps this was casual. Her general performance of the part is superlative, and the speech where she stabs herself is above description terrible in the utterance. It is immediately after the entrance of HORATIO, who comes to tell her of her father's death.

And dost thou bear me yet, thou patient earth?
Dost thou not labour with thy murd'rous weight?
And you ye glittering heav'nly host of stars,
Hide your fair heads in clouds, or I shall blast you;
For I am all contagion, death, and ruin,
And Nature sickens at me.—Rest thou world
This Parricide shall be thy plague no more.
Thus—thus I set thee free.

So perfect is her conception of the infamy of her crime, and horror of its consequences, and such is her detestation of herself and of the ruin she has induced, that we think it impossible for an innocent female to behold her agony, without feeling an additional dread of the like sin; or if she had begun to cherish vicious inclinations, not to be terrified from putting them in act. It is no hyperbole to say we congratulate the nation on the happy effects that are likely, at least for a time,

to

to follow from its being so much the fashion among those of high rank to attend the performances of Mrs. Siddons. That they were degenerating into that laxity of manners which ridicules the ties of conjugal obligations, and the dictates of self-denial, is too notorious to be disputed; there is now, we hope, a probability that they may be roused from their lethargy.

We cannot close this account of her Characters without noticing the affecting and capital stile in which she plays the mad scene of *Belvidera*, and of this nothing can be a better proof, than when in the midst of her phrenzy, she breaks out into a laugh, we see the audience always burst into tears. The reality of her madness must be thoroughly impressed upon the mind, before laughter can incite a sensation so different as that of weeping. The manner likewise of her pronouncing the exclamation oh! in all passages where the passions are violently agitated, is one of her most marking beauties, and peculiar to herself. Let us conclude with a few general observations, which may point out to others the errors they are liable to, and the excellencies it is their duty to emulate.

We

We have before spoken of the attention which Mrs. SIDDONS pays to the manners, and we repeat the observation, to shew the necessity of this attention by its effects. All who excel as Artists, Poets, or Critics, pay the strictest regard to consistency, and the production of a whole. Whoever neglects or slightly regards this, is in continual danger of offending. The idea of a whole must extend itself as carefully to each distinct part of a performance, as to the work collectively. Incongruities give disgust in a proportionate degree as they deviate from truth and reality. The Actor who at his entrance is seen to stare about, or even to take what he may suppose an unobserved peep, that he may examine how many of his acquaintance he can discover in the Pitt and Boxes, loses sight not only of character but of respect, and deserves a severe reprehension. Yet this is done at our Theatres every night with an astonishing assurance. Whatever reminds the spectator that he is at the play-house, and that ROSINCRAUS and GUILDENSTERN are not the school-fellows of HAMLET, but two silly youngsters who have taken up the profession

fession of an Actor, because they are idle, and not because they are ambitious, brings to his remembrance several disagreeable circumstances all at once, and inspires him with a portion of contempt for Messieurs Rosincraus and Guildenstern, of which were they aware, they would certainly behave with more propriety and caution. Nor is this censure aimed at or confined to individuals; the fault is so common, that there are but very few who are not sometimes guilty of it. This evil is of the same species with that of the Actors personal jokes and laughter on the Stage among each other: and of these we must say, in the language of Adam Overdo,* "It is time to take enormity by the forehead, and brand it." Another very common and very great Stage error is, the inattention with which Actors are apt to treat not only the general business of the Play, but the very Characters with whom they are speaking. If a letter be to be thrown down on the ground, the Actor scorns to lower his dignity so far as to stoop and take it up again; the

* See Ben Johnson's *Bartholomew Fair*.

the scene-man must enter to do such common drudgery: no matter that it contains secrets of the utmost importance, and that the person he represents could not possibly be so careless about things on which his happiness or even life may depend. If a duel be to be fought, the hat is thrown away, for the sake of shewing, as we suppose, with what a grace it may be done, and not because men always throw away their hats when they fight duels: and when some good-natured friend comes to part them, they disdain as much to pick up a hat as a letter, chusing rather to walk a few miles bareheaded. And here we may farther remark, that the sight of a drawn sword has very little or no effect on the countenance of a Player. Death is rather a serious concern when it makes such *near* approaches, to all people else; but as the property-man keeps neither three-edged nor two-edged swords in his possession, but a set of blunt, harmless weapons, that scorn with any force of arm to penetrate as far as the skin, the Actor very logically concludes, it would be a folly to shew fear since he is certain there is no danger. He is likewise apt to discover an equal degree

degree of contempt concerning the purport of the dialogue. It is none of his business to notice what other people say, if he, in OTHELLO's phrase, do but "know his cue without the prompter." *That* is, what he is to watch for, and not to give any signs of anxiety or concern, at the reasons, threats, or promises of a person, who, like him, is only come there to say his lesson. The proverb says, "every dog has his day," and again, "he that sharply chides is the most ready to pardon," both of which we often see verified on the Stage, where each Actor takes his turn to make a speech, and be *very* angry, and then—to hold his tongue, and be *very* cool. And thus the alternate buckets come and go; the empty one descends, while the full one is wound up. The different passions that might be supposed once to have taken place in the minds, and been apparent in the countenances of the Roman mob, when ANTHONY harangued over the dead body of CÆSAR, are nothing to a Player; he neither knows, nor wants to know any thing about such matters. He is certain CÆSAR's legacies will never descend to him or his heirs;

he never saw the Tiber, nor was he ever in the walks, the private arbors, or the new-planted orchards, that ANTHONY talks of: *he stands there to speak his part.* If, indeed, he can make his friends in the gallery laugh at the quaintness of his dress, or the drollery of his grimace, while ANTHONY is deploring the fate of his mighty master, that is a deed worthy his ambition, but as for the real manner in which it may be conjectured the Plebeians of Rome actually behaved on that occasion, it is a thing he never once thought of.

We have spoken thus ironically of glaring, though common improprieties, that the Reader may recollect, with the greater degree of force, the precision and accuracy of good Performers, and especially of Mrs. SIDDONS. Her eyes never wander, her passions are as active while she is silent as when she is speaking, she is not BELVIDERA this moment, and Mrs. SIDDONS the next, but she is BELVIDERA always. She does not stab herself, as if she were sheathing her scissars in heroics. She does not continually make her exit with a strut, or expire with a groan; but her manner

ner varies with her situation. She conjures up the ghost of the Character she personates, beholds it with the piercing eye of strong imagination, and embodies the phantom.

We now bespeak a few linesfor some remarks upon her performance of Comedy :— a walk which it is commonly supposed she is by nature and habit incapable of treading.

We hesitate not to say, that there are Characters in Comedy, which she not only performs with great excellence, but which she *alone* can perform of the Company in which she acts.

The first of them is ROSALIND, in the beautiful Comedy of *As You Like It*. He who has seen her in this enchanting Character, has beheld an exhibition, which, for delicacy, sensibility, and grace, never, perhaps, had its equal. Her tones are so captivating in all the softer scenes,

> They give a very echo to the seat
> Where love is thron'd.

When she assumes the saucy Forester, her manner never leads you to forget the minute elegance

elegance of lovely counterfeit. She therefore excites little merriment, and the hoydening broad manner of other Actresses is, by the *many*, preferred:—but what is lost by this preference? Only this—the *mind*, which alone could conceive the very images which fall from the lips.—For the romping levity of her antagonist, we are compelled to lose all those divine traits of tender passion and exquisite feeling with which the part abounds, or what is worse than their retrenchment, hear them delivered

"Without or soul or sense to apprehend."

We will mention, as a second character, a *modern wife*—Mrs. OAKLEY. The truth and nature of every sentence she utters can only be equalled by the language she is put to speak.

It is not by this intended to be inferred, that therefore she is a Comic Actress equal to all the claims of THALIA. By no means; but where characters have the tincture of grave decorum, violent passion, or refined sensibility, in Comedy even she is as much unrivalled as in Tragedy.

POETICAL CHARACTER.

Accept, fair SIDDONS! this spontaneous lay,
Which Feeling bids us, as a tribute, pay
To that new Queen, whom every breast must own
Sublimely seated on the Tragic Throne.
Yet mean we not thy Rivals to decry:
A different grace may please a different eye.
But partial should we seem, we just shall be
To Nature, Reason, Sentiment, and Thee,

O GARRICK! Nature's great and darling son,
Had not thy course too speedily been run,
What joy had dawn'd upon thy dazzled sight,
A gem so precious to have drawn to light!
Nor could mean jealousy, as scandal says,
Have made thee sicken at the orient blaze.
But this bright jewel from the mine to bring,
Delightful task! was left for generous KING:
'Twas his, all radiant though its native ray,
The polish'd diamond fully to display.

LONG had the buskin'd Actor trod the Stage,
And fram'd his voice to softness and to rage;
A Hero now, and now a Virgin he,
As if extremes in Nature could agree!

Before

Before one Female was induc'd to feign
A Woman's part among the Thespian train.
A timid modesty from view conceal'd
What taste declar'd enchanting, when reveal'd:
And lovely Woman, born to give delight,
With winning sweetness gain'd upon the sight.
O Taste! thy maxims had the Muse pursu'd,
That Public Happiness is Public Good;
That Happiness with Virtue is entwin'd,
And Pleasure true with Sentiment refin'd;
The Stage of Morals had become the school,
Instead of rank Corruption's poison'd pool.

But soon the Muse from Virtue turn'd astray,
To sensual Man a sacrifice to pay;
And, when the bashful fears were laid aside,
Woman, seduc'd by vanity and pride,
An Actress shone but to disclose her charms,
And woo each gay Spectator to her arms.
For this her tears, in some afflicting hour,
Descend, like dew, to moisten Beauty's flower;
Her dying eyes for this, like diamonds blaze;
For this her bosom courts the wanton gaze;
While, laid voluptuously, she wakes desire,
And seems in amorous transports to expire.
From these lewd tricks, what Actress stands exempt,
Who charms possess'd to warrant the attempt?

How different SIDDONS! thy affecting stile,
Thou glory, pride, and wonder of our isle!
Unconscious of the crowds thy talents please,
Thy motions all are dignity and ease:
No trap, no lure, for mean applause is laid;
No start, no languish, to the Pit is paid;
To Nature just and thy Dramatic part,
Thy action all is taught thee by the heart;
Without whose lessons fairest Players seek
In vain with virtue's tear t' impearl the honest cheek.

Thy piercing eyes, through Passion's maze that roll,
Mark all the painful feelings of the soul,
With look as keen as those allied to joy,
Or those where revels the Idalian boy.
The glance of rage, distraction's frantic stare,
The pangs of grief, the workings of despair,
Are there distinctly seen: there drawn so true,
That Beauty's self with terror strikes the view!
When to the eye their aid the features lend,
And all the tints of darkest trouble blend,
To paint *Calista*, fond ill-fated maid!
By boundless love and confidence betray'd.

When her proud spirit flames, like fury fell,
That friendship dares unwelcome truth to tell;
When self-reproach her haughty bosom stings,
And public shame yet sharper sorrow brings;

When slavish passion yields to high disdain,
And all the heroine throbs in every vein;
When vengeance just has laid her spoiler low,
And she her weakness wails in weeds of woe,
All hope extinct; yet heaves a woman's sigh,
That one so young, so gay, so soon should die!
And drops, by intervals, a guilty tear,
Nor knows she sheds it o'er *Lothario's* bier:
Beneath a parent's frown, when press'd to earth,
The day she execrates that gave her birth;
When, by a father's anguish'd hear forgiven,
She smiles, forgetful of offended Heaven:
Then boldly calls the poignard to her aid,
And refuge takes in death's tremendous shade!
Thy every look and every motion shew
Th' Italian bride, the master-piece of ROWE.

Thus far, great Actress! on the stormy main
Of strong emotion, thine unrivall'd reign,
Where pleasure rises from the shock of pain,
Adventurous have we steer'd thy swelling sail
To view, obedient still to passion's gale.
But we in vain should try to catch the grace
Of thy fine form, and all-expressive face,
When beauteous *Shore* assumes the mourner's moan,
And *Belvidera's* woes are all thy own;
Thy action's magic powers, thy voice's heav'nly tone.

Hold! *Jaffier*, hold! let fall th' assasin's knife,
Nor dare to hurt thy chaste, thy loving wife:
For no base league with lawless men forego
That higher faith you to her virtues owe.
O hear that angel's tongue, that cherub's eye,
That pleads to thee! and that impassion'd sigh,
Heav'd from a heart, so tender and so true!
Which all its hoard of sweets reserv'd for you.
'Tis *Belvidera* pleads; let that dear name
Revive the ardour of your mutual flame:
Let those fond arms about thy neck be thrown,
And all the worth of *Belvidera* own.
He yields! he yields!—What ruffian would not feel?
His slackening nerves resign the bloodless steel;
While to his bosom *Belvidera* grows,
And loads her grief with yet untreasur'd woes.
That grief, that love, so strongly is express'd,
That *Jaffier's* wife in SIDDONS stands confess'd.

Ye wedded fair, with tempting beauty blest,
And by the youths of higher ranks caress'd;
Ye city-dames, whom courtly toys allure,
Your eyes turn hither—and expect a cure.
Behold unhappy *Shore*, whose wealthy spouse,
While she was faithful to her marriage vows,
Allow'd her all that luxury can crave,
Or what makes vanity's light bosom heave:
Yet she, by pleasure's flowery hopes misled,
And proud ambition, left her husband's bed,

To

To be the mistress of an amorous King,
And hear the lofty halls with sprightly music ring;
To see the titled tribe their tribute lay
Low at her feet; their flatteries to repay
With stars and strings, and 'mongst the modish fair,
To shine herself, the first beyond compare.
But, sad reverse; the royal EDWARD dead,
Her soul is fill'd with agony and dread:
Nor causeless fill'd; from her exalted sphere
She's hurl'd, the load of guilty shame to bear:
In penance doom'd to walk the public streets,
And be revil'd by every wretch she meets.
Nor this alone; want, meagre want succeeds,
While with reproach her wounded bosom bleeds.
Lo! she, pale shade! hangs shivering at the door
That wide flew open at her name before,
Now sternly shut: no friend to share her grief,
No grateful bosom to afford relief!
Of all the numerous train her bounty fed,
Not one assists her with a crumb of bread;
Extended on the earth she fainting lies;
And, gnaw'd with hunger, mercy craves, and dies!
Through every scene our eyes with tears run o'er,
And we no Actress see—but hapless *Shore*.

Yet dare we not pourtray thy *Isabel*,
Or thy perfections in *Euphrasia* tell;

Where filial piety exulting springs,
And from her milky breast the woman flings;
Like vengeful NEMESIS, the dagger draws,
And stabs a tyrant in her father's cause!
While righteous JOVE approves the violent deed,
And men with joy behold the monster bleed.

Pathetic SOUTHERN! leave a while the sky,
And with thy *Isabella* feast thine eye.
Array'd in all the loveliness of tears,
She comes our hearts to shake with tender fears.
These fears are realiz'd!—Affliction's tide
Flows in with griefs from every side!
Where can she refuge seek?—Ah! whither flee,
Eternal Source of Goodness! but to Thee?—
Angelic mourner! on thy *Biron's* breast
Sink down, and steal to everlasting rest;
On his yet warm, but lifeless, bleeding clay!
Repose till seraphs hym th' awakening lay.
Alas! from this last pillow of her woes,
Must she be torn?—What agonizing throes?
She clasps it yet!—What anguish-darting eyes?
Too feeble arms!—What soul-dissolving cries!—
Her hold is lost!—Distractedly she raves,
And wildly death with her dear husband craves!
Her child forgot—sweet boy! that courts her eye,
And seems to sympathize with every sigh!

'Tis

'Tis madness all!——O SIDDONS, cease to strain
The nerve of pleasure on the rack of pain:
It thrills already in divine excess!
Yet fondly we the fair tormentor bless,
And woo her to prolong our exquisite distress.

Mr. QUICK.

COVENT-GARDEN.

MR. QUICK is a native of London, where his father was many years a capital Brewer. But whether accident or inclination introduced him into Theatric Life is unknown. Before it is probable, however, that *Reason* could have any share in his choice, we find him, when almost a child, figuring away in the Company of a Mr. CARR, of whose rank and respectability the reader may judge by being informed, that the principal places at which they performed, were Deptford, Hackney, and other small towns in the environs of the metropolis.

In this humble troop, Mr. C. BANNISTER, and others of equal merit, made their first appearance.

The parts to which Mr. QUICK attached himself,

himself, were those of sprightly Comedy, in which he discovered so much vivacity and clearness, that an engagement was very soon offered him at the Hay-Market, by Mr. FOOTE. There, however, he remained a long time in obscurity, without any chance of shewing his abilities, till called forth by accident. Chance is frequently the friend of Genius, when Genius has no other; and though she has nothing to bestow but opportunity, that often becomes the best means of promotion, by introducing her to the most liberal of all patrons, *the Public*—and thus she befriended QUICK.

The late Mr. SHUTER, of laughing memory, by the levity of his disposition, involved in numerous embarrassments, was offered a second Benefit at Covent-Garden, at the conclusion of the season, and Mr. MACKLIN, from a wish to serve a brother in distress, proferred his services in *Sir Archy Mac Sarcasm*; but the Piece could not be performed for want of a *Mordecai*. SHUTER, who possessed the faculty of discovering genius, as well as displaying it, obviated the difficulty by chusing QUICK for the representative

sentative of the *Jew Beau*, in which he did honour to SHUTER's judgment; for he acquitted himself so well, that with the recommendation of WOODWARD, who was his particular friend, he was immediately engaged at Covent-Garden.

With such an introduction, it was natural to expect that his talents would be frequently called into action, and that consequently his fame and his emoluments would both greatly increase; but in this very reasonable expectation he was unfortunately disappointed. Several seasons elapsed without the least opportunity of trying further those powers which had received such flattering eulogiums in *Beau Mordecai*, and so much was he disgusted with the *dumb attendants* given him to personate, and the smallness of his salary, that he was often on the point of quitting London, and joining some country Company, where, if he received no greater income, he would have had the satisfaction of representing the principal characters.

In the Summer, he was engaged for Portsmouth by Mr. YOUNGER, who was then Manager of that Theatre, as well as Prompter at

at Covent-Garden. In Portsmouth, QUICK had greater scope for his abilities, which he displayed to such advantage as to procure the favour of the whole town, and the friendship of the Manager.

Mr. YOUNGER was universally esteemed for his philanthropy, of which a very considerable part of the present most eminent Performers now in London have felt the generous effects. No Manager of a Theatre was more ready, even solicitous to do services. That gentleman saw Mr. QUICK's merit, and encouraged him to have patience, and when the *Padlock* was ordered to be got up at Covent-Garden, he gave him the part of *Mungo*; — this QUICK at first declined, from a fear of attempting it after DIBDIN, who had very happily succeeded in it; but Mr. YOUNGER insisted on his performing it: QUICK consented to personate the *sable Hero*, and how much he is the hero of the piece, every one knows who has seen him perform it.

He was now recognized by the Public as an Actor of great humour, and gradually advanced in his profession; but the part which crowned him with the greatest *eclat*, and at once

once stamped him a Performer of the very first class, was that of *Isaac*, in the *Duenna*, a part which he pourtrays with such whim and justness of character, that it becomes, in his hands, the most entertaining character of that charming Opera.

At one time Mr. QUICK had a share in the Bristol Theatre, where he performed with uncommon success; and here he married his present wife, who is the daughter of a respectable Clergyman of that city; but Liverpool, of late years, has proved the most profitable to him in his Summer excursion.

Mr. QUICK has lately attempted the arduous character of *Richard*.—On what ground he assumed it, we cannot say; if to put money in his pocket, it was an admirable Benefit Scheme. The Piece went off well (as might be expected) from so great a favourite of the Public; and if laughing and good-humour are to be admitted a proof of approbation, even GARRICK's fame would, in this instance, give way to that of QUICK.

Few men are more respected in private life, and none on the Stage bear a more amiable character than Mr. QUICK: he associates occasionally with his brother Performers, but without

without entering into their excesses; and as he is naturally of a benevolent disposition, he has the good word of every one. He lives within his income, and must be worth money: indeed his general conduct approaches nearer to that of a tradesman than that of a Dramatic Performer.

POETICAL CHARACTER.

QUICK, with a store of comic powers supply'd,
Led by plain sense, and making life his guide,
Though late the subject of the Muse's lays,
Can n'er be least in her impartial praise.
While parts from Nature, drawn with artless ease,
Of crabbed Age or rustic Youth, can please;
While the droll characters in various life,
Of noisy Humour, and of vulgar Strife,
Display'd wish spirit as with truth design'd,
Receive the welcome they deserve to find,
Long in the rolls of comic fame shall he
A first-rate fav'rite with the Public be.
Yet, though we thus the tributary lay
Of just applause to real merit pay,
Candour compels us to declare, that QUICK
Is oft seduc'd by Pantomimic trick;
Oft on the crowd for manual favour draws,
Content by gesture to procure applause;

Though

Though he might gain the justest praise at will,
By the bare force of genuine comic skill;
Oft too, to aid the bard's declining force,
QUICK, from himself, would fain derive resource,
And kindly strengthen Humour's ebbing vein,
With the prompt flowings of his copious brain.
This in a man, neglected and obscure,
Pity, for once, might tempt us to endure;
But, in an Actor of establish'd fame,
Should always firmly be repuls'd with blame,
In duteous rev'rence of the Poet's name.

MRS.

Mrs. BILLINGTON.

COVENT-GARDEN.

COVENT-GARDEN Theatre has been distinguished for its superiority and excellence in Musical Pieces and Pantomimes; while that of Drury-Lane has held pre-eminence in Tragedy and Comedy. Very lately, however, the other house has gone beyond them in Operaticals, while it has left them an exclusive right to Pantomime. The feats of the motley-coloured Gentlemen, when directed by RICH, and the charming Operas introduced by BEARD, proved equally attractive with the abilities even of GARRICK, and so sensible was that able Player and Manager of the Public attachment to *sound* and *shew*, that he often brought forward such pieces, though few of them received any proportionate share of approbation with those of his competitors.

Mr.

Mr. HARRIS, the present Manager, and principal Proprietor of Covent-Garden Theatre, has followed the steps of his predecessors; and though his Pantomimes have not been so ingenious, his profits have been more considerable. His success is intirely ascribable to unprejudiced, impartial conduct, in giving scope to abilities that bring him money. He regards merit only as the town follows it, and regulates his theatric arrangements intirely by the public taste. He has rendered Operas more alluring than ever; and principally by the attractive power of the present subject.

Greatly, however, as we feel ourselves delighted by her song, we hope she will, in some degree, remit her application, least, like the celebrated Mrs. ARNE, she should fall a sacrifice to the ardency of her assiduity, and deprive the musical world of its greatest treasure.

The superior taste and execution of Mrs. BILLINGTON may, in some degree, be supposed to have descended from her father, who was a German Musician, and her mother, the late Mrs. WEICHSELL, whose warblings in Vauxhall

Vauxhall must be recent in every memory. The first attempts of Miss WEICHSELL were heard with delight by her parents, who bestowed the utmost pains on her musical education; and her first introduction to the town was at the Hay Market Theatre, about sixteen or seventeen years since, in a Benefit Concert for her mother.

She officiated at many public and private Concerts so late as 1782, and was looked upon by the most eminent amateurs, as a prodigy in the science, particularly as a Performer on the Piano-Forte. About this time Mr. BILLINGTON paid his addresses to her, and his personal recommendations soon prevailed upon her to marry him.

The Stage seemed to be more pregnant with advantages, and promised more emolument, permanency, and fame, than any other sphere in which she could employ her talents. Soon after her marriage with Mr. BILLINGTON, she entered into articles with Mr. DALY, the Manager in Dublin, where she became a very popular Singer; and where her husband was engaged for the Orchestra.

Among

Among the Gallants of Dublin it may be supposed that her charming person did not pass unnoticed; nor did she haughtily repel those who addressed her. Mr. KRAY was the first who engaged her attention to an eminent degree, and pretending a great want of some particular music, she dispatched her husband to Liverpool, while she visited Mr. K. But finding Mr. BILLINGTON was intitled by Law, and determined to receive her salary at the Theatre, she thought it prudent to be reconciled to him.

Mrs. DALY had long suspected her husband and our heroine, and had watched them with vigilance and caution. One evening she saw them, through the key-hole, in the Lady's dressing-room, and, without disturbing the happy couple, she brought Mr. BILLINGTON to enjoy the prospect likewise. But that Gentleman, instead of taking immediate vengeance, was anxious to expose the scene to others, in order that he might be enabled to commence a prosecution.

Mr. BILLINGTON now talked loudly of the matter, and of obtaining ample redress in a Court of Law. Proceedings had begun: but

but the Lady, whether from shame, or a desire of screening her paramour, vowed, that if the affair came to public trial, she would never more appear on the Dublin Stage. Mr. DALY then declared, that if she refused performing, he would prosecute her husband for the sum of 500l. stated in the articles which Mr. BILLINGTON had signed, and which would be forfeited if Mrs. BILLINGTON declined fulfilling the engagement.

In this predicament, Mr. BILLINGTON thought, that as he was certain of being obliged to pay the 500l. and that as the damages to be awarded by a Jury would probably be but small, his wife's character not being the most immaculate, it would be better to hush up the matter; and after having made the whole quite public, he took his *dutiful* spouse again into his favour.

Mrs. BILLINGTON's victory on this occasion made her less careful of appearances than formerly. The late Duke of RUTLAND, then Lord Lieutenant, became her admirer; but the Duchess, being universally esteemed, our heroine was rendered particularly obnoxious by this last intimacy, insomuch, that finding the

the voice of the populace very much against her, she obtained letters of recommendation from his Excellency to the Marquis of CAERMARTHEN, then Secretary of State, who had influence to obtain her the honour of having her first appearance at Covent-Garden commanded by their MAJESTIES, which was as *Rosetta*, in *Love in a Village*, Feb. 13, 1786.

This uncommon and honourable distinction gave great consequence to Mrs. BILLINGTON at her *entrée*; yet her vocal abilities were not so generally admired in her first, as in subsequent seasons. Mrs. BANNISTER had been for years the reigning favourite; her stile of singing was simple, correct, and pleasing; but unenriched and unadorned with those delightful exuberances of fancy, that universally captivate and astonish.

Though the musical world were enraptured with Mrs. BILLINGTON from the first moment she appeared, yet the middling class could not perfectly relish her novel and foreign stile, until they were familiarized to it; indeed, a trip to Italy and France, with that scientific teacher SACCHINI, in the Summer,

was

was of great service, as it enabled her to make much observation and improvement.

But her obliging temper could not resist the importunities of afflicted swains in this country, more than in Ireland. A late Royal Duke, known by the name of SQUIRE MORGAN in an affair of gallantry with Lady G—R, about twenty-four years ago, was fascinated by her smiles, and attended her constantly as the public applause, every night she performed. She soon after became attached to Mr. B——L, a gentleman celebrated as an amateur in the Mendozian science, with whom, we believe, she still lives on amicable terms.

Mr. and Mrs. BILLINGTON have now renounced the vulgar prejudices of education, and live upon more liberal philosophic principles than the narrow ideas of some religionists prescribe. The quarrels of man and wife they happily prevent by giving each other unlimited liberty.

Mrs. BILLINGTON is at present (the summer of 1794) making the tour of Italy. She has received the most distinguished honours, and a people whose very soul is harmony, follow and admire her with the most unbounded passion.

To her own *science* and *feeling* it is not even

for ITALY to add much—but something no doubt may be added to her style; and the genius of music in his place of dearest residence may repress the luxuriance of her cadences, and simplify the unnecessary toil, which in the German school too often takes the precedency of tone and expression.

To say what has been said a thousand times of this Syren of the Stage, that her voice is exquisite, her execution inimitable, her compass extensive, her intonation just, and her shake perfect, would indeed be saying the truth, but not the whole truth.

The compass of this Singer's pipe is doubtless extensive, but not so much as has been imagined. In the lower part it is very limited. Of this she is sensible: and in her *bravoura airs* often substitutes one *octave* for another; a licence which passes unobserved by the million, but escapes not the notice of cultivated scientific ears. It is no further censurable than being an act of rebellion against the Composer, and sometimes inverting the chords of the accompaniments. It is like the wild luxuriance of poetical imagination, which, though against the cold rules of the Critic, constitute the value of true poetry.

poetry. In airs of expression, the enchanting sweetness of her voice and manner is beyond all praise. Her attitudes, although in general graceful, would, however, be improved by omitting the inelegant one of pressing her hands against her bosom, in passages that require exertion. It never fails to communicate ideas of labour, struggle, and pain. The Heroines of the Italian Opera excell her as much in attitudes, as she excells them in voice.

Though some Singers are more sublime, yet not one, in our judgment, is so pathetic, correct, and delicate. So nice is her ear, that she can immediately point to any instrument out of tune, let the number accompanying it be ever so great. She is indefatigable in her attention to the business of the Stage, and to improve in her profession, and we must say her endeavours have not been fruitless. There is a softness---a peculiar bewitching sweetness in her manner, that wonderfully prepossesses every auditor in her favour. The feeling and discrimination with which she sings, "*Cease yonr funning*," in the *Beggar's Opera*, proves, that those airs which are listened to with indifference from other Singers, may be rendered new, exquisite, and

highly attractive, by the magic sounds and exquisite judgment of Mrs. BILLINGTON.

Mrs. BILLINGTON very frequently, and it is confessed, very happily, introduces new Songs into old Pieces—and indeed every thing she does on the Stage seems to please the Public highly. She is also a first-rate Harpsichord Player; and it is rather surprizing that Mr. HARRIS has not thought of bringing forward this accomplishment, as he is very justly noted for exhibiting his performers with every advantage.

Her person, though not completely elegant, is genteel and pleasing; and of her simple, delicate and beautiful countenance, the powers of description fail us altogether. It is alike superior to the delineation of the pen and the colouring of the pencil.

POETICAL CHARACTER.

Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with those raptures moves the vocal air,
To testify his hidden evidence:
How sweet her notes do float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night
At every fall something the raven down
Of darkness till it smiles—— MILTON.

Mr. FARREN.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THOUGH Spouting Clubs have afforded a luxuriant theme of ridicule to many Writers, yet we do not find that they have afforded so many good Actors as might be supposed from the frequent mention we meet of them; not but most of our Performers have occasionally peeped into those seminaries, yet, excepting the Hero of this page, we know none in any esteem whose talents were first noticed in them.

Mr. FARREN was an apprentice to a *Tin Smith*, in St. Martin's le-Grand, when his breast first glowed with desire to wield the truncheon. As DAVY says in *Bon Ton*, "A six-pennyworth at one of the Houses was his greatest gratification;" yet he was often ob-

liged to depart before the Play was over, to prevent the remonstrances or reproaches of his master.

While those six-penny gentry were waiting at the doors until the time arrived for the admission of half-price, they descanted on the merits of the Performers with the greatest freedom, gravity, and confidence; and among those *celestial* Critics Mr. FARREN soon distinguished himself by his acute remarks. Flattered by his ingenuity as an amateur, he was led to put in practice the improvements himself had suggested, and as his apprenticeship was drawing towards a conclusion, and he had greater liberty of enjoying his evenings from home, he became a member, and a conspicuous one, of a *Spouting Club*, at the One Tun in the Strand.

Here he found more difficulty than he expected, in the practical part of the profession, and submitted with great deference and attention to the corrections of his pronunciation. He was recommended to Mr. YATES, who, pleased with his appearance, voice, and good sense, apprenticed him to the *Buskin* when his time expired with the Tin-Man.

Mr.

Mr. YATES was at that time, and still is, Manager and proprietor of the Birmingham Theatre; — to that town he conveyed our young Hero, who made his *debut* with evident indications of ability. He continued his probation in the country, and reflected such honour on the judgment of his Tutor, as induced Mr. YATES to bring him out at Drury Lane, in the Tragedy of *Medea*, for his wife's benefit.

His appearance and voice impressed the Audience with favourable ideas of his talents. The spirit he evinced, though rather uncouth, it was hoped experience would polish, and that when placed in the genial soil of London, those gifts which Nature bestowed on him, would render him an excellent Actor, when refined and moulded by art:---nor was the Public much mistaken, as he has proved himself if not a first-rate, yet a respectable second-rate Actor.

Mr. YATES obtained him an engagement in Drury-Lane; and as Love forms a leading feature in the memoirs of the histrionic heroes, Mr. FARREN about this time commenced an attachment with Mrs. H———,

whose husband was a respectable tradesman in Worcester, and to whom she had eight children.

After the demise of GARRICK, Drury-Lane was destitute of any Tragic Actor of merit; and from the general encouragement which was given to the exertion of talents, Mr. FARREN had every scope he possibly could wish for. He had already been commended; he was young, and the Managers were determined to put his powers to the most ample test, in the hope of drawing forth such abilities as might honour and serve their Theatre. *Othello* and other first-rate Characters he represented with considerable *eclat*; but though there were many advocates in his favour, yet his success did not attract numbers, and consequently his elevation was transient.

Mrs. SIDDONS soon after made her *entrée*, and Mr. FARREN imagining himself thrown too much in the shade in the Plays with that lady, and being refused her assistance by the Proprietors on his Benefit night, though she performed for Messrs. SMITH, PALMER, BENSLEY, and BRERETON, he conceived himself ill-treated, and when the term of his articles

articles expired, he enlisted under the banners of Mr. HARRIS, at Covent-Garden; where he was allowed for some time to tread the heights of the Drama, but where he is now nearly fallen into the same sphere in which he officiated at Drury-Lane.

About twelve years ago he formed an intimacy with a Mr. P————ts, a gentleman possessed of somewhat more than a thousand per annum; and such affection resulted from that intimacy, that Mr. FARREN easily persuaded him to come and live in his house. He has taken an elegant house in Gower-Street, Bedford-Square. Mr. P———, who is uncommonly docile, submits his income to his friend's management; and this, with the emoluments arising from his theatrical exertions, and an annuity of two hundred pounds possessed by Mrs. FARREN, enable them to live in great splendour. They keep a carriage, footmen, &c. and Mr. FARREN thinks there is no necessity of undeceiving the world by telling that he is not at the whole expence.

The theatrical fame of Mr. FARREN is certainly at its height. He pleased the eye

both in countenance and person, but is now grown rather clumsey :—his voice is very powerful, and capable of variation; and although he seems to have laboured to express his Author with great animation and beauty, yet his efforts have not extended beyond passive propriety. The *Graces* he should particularly court, for his deportment is by no means genteel or elegant; and his passion too often makes him descend from the dignity of his character, by staring, and rolling his eyes, and suffering his face to redden with the heat of a testy Welchman.

MR.

Mrs. MERRY.

COVENT-GARDEN.

NOT less esteemed for her public talents than for the strict propriety of her conduct in private life, we enter on the Memoirs of Mrs. Merry with pleasure, conscious that her moral rectitude must prove an exception to the general opinion entertained of Players by the scrupulous or illiberal classes of society.

Mr. Brunton, her father, was formerly a *Grocer* in Drury-Lane. The Drama had long floated in his imagination superior to the produce of the East and West Indies, and some trifling embarrassments in his affairs suggested to him the idea of converting his partiality for the *Buskin*, which he had hitherto considered as an

an amusement, to a means of procuring a livelihood, if not a fortune. He took his family with him and went to Norwich, where he became a theatrical favourite, and was soon after engaged for Bath, a situation of more emolument and respectability.

His success here was equally flattering, and to the reputation of a tolerable Actor he added that of a *would-be Author*; he shewed a neat turn of thought, which was happily evinced one day previously to his Benefit, when he was scating on a piece of ice near Bath, in the presence of many genteel personages, among whom was the Duchess of Devonshire; being a proficient in the art, he cut his name in the ice, and was observed by the Duchess, who exclaimed, "*extremely easy.*" Mr. Brunton replied with great submission, "*I wish I was as easy as your Grace.*" The generous fair-one took the hint, and when she reached home, sent a twenty pound note, as a present for a few tickets to his night.

For several years he had looked with a fond hope to the fame of his daughters, whom he intended to introduce on the Stage, and took great

great delight and pains in their instruction, particularly the eldest, who is our present subject. She was regarded as a sluttish, indolent girl, by the members of the Theatre, and her presumption in soaring at once to the heights of Tragedy, it was thought would be perfectly humbled at her first attempt.

She made her *debut* in Bath in the beginning of the year 1785, as the *Grecian Daughter*; and previous to the Play, the following Address, written by Mr. MEYLER, was spoken by her father:

Sweet hope! for whom his anxious parent burns,
Lo! from his tour the travel'd heir returns,
With each accomplishment that Europe knows;
With all that Learning or her son bestows;
With Roman Wit and Grecian Wisdom fraught,
His mind has ev'ry letter'd Art been taught.
Now the fond father thinks his boy of age,
To take an active part in Life's vast stage;
And Britain's Senate opes a ready door
To fill the seat his sire had fill'd before.
There when some question of great moment springs,
He'll rise—then "hear him, hear him," loudly rings;
He speaks—th' enraptur'd listening throng admire
His voice, his argument, his genius, fire!
The fond old man, in pure exstatic joy,

Blesses

Blesses the gods that gave him such a boy!
But if insipid dullness guide his tongue,
With what sharp pangs his aged heart is wrung—
Despair, and shame, and sorrow make him rue
The hour he brought him to the public view.
And now what tears! what doubts, what joys I feel!
When my first hope attempts her first appeal:
Attempts an arduous task—*Euphrasia's* woe—
Her parent's nurse—or deals the deadly blow!
Some sparks of genius—if I right presage,
You'll find in this young Novice of the Stage:
Else had not I for all this earth affords
Led her thus early on these dangerous boards.
If your applause give sanction to my aim,
And this night's effort promise future fame,
She shall proceed—but if some bar you find,
And that my *fondness* made my *judgment* blind,
Discern no voice, no feeling, she possess,
Nor fire that can the passions well express;
Then, then for ever, shall she quit this scene,
Be the plain housewife, not the Tragic Queen.

The unfavourable reports circulated by those who formed their opinions rather from external appearance than mental ability, operated in her favour:—the Audience expected to see a *mawkin*, but saw a CIBBER. The applause was proportionate to the surprise; every

every mouth emitted her praise, and she performed several parts in Bath and Bristol, a *phenomenon* in the theatrical hemisphere.

Conscious that talents may sometimes waste their beauties in obscurity, after the noise their novelty has created, Mr. BRUNTON was indefatigable in sounding her panegyric through the newspapers into the ear of London; and as the furor for Tragedy excited by Mrs. SIDDONS, had not then subsided, Mr. HARRIS engaged Miss BRUNTON in hopes of her being, by her powers, enabled to make a stand against the MELPOMENE of the other house.

This was no sooner known, than the Conductors of the diurnal publications, some with a laudable design of encouraging blushing merit, but more from a wish of humbling Mrs. SIDDONS, by raising a rival, began to puff Miss BRUNTON with indiscriminate eulogium:——voice, figure, face, elegance, judgment, pathos, expression, and every qualification she was said to possess; insomuch that the public curiosity was raised to such a pitch that it was scarcely possible for her to equal expectation.

Anxious to avoid comparison, she chose *Horatia* in the *Roman Father*, for her *entrée* in the metropolis, and she was received with the most liberal applause by a crowded theatre; in the fifth Act she exerted herself with great spirit and success.

But the part was only second in the Play. HENDERSON, who performed the *Roman Father* with uncommon animation, rivetted the attention of all present, and very much clowded the fame of our juvenile Candidate, whose mistaken friends had extolled her abilities in the most superlative terms. This brought on comparisons with Mrs. SIDDONS, by which Miss BRUNTON suffered, although she was universally acknowledged an excellent Actress, and, being so young, of great promise. During her first season she was very much followed, but after that her attraction ceased.

Her person and countenance are by no means formed for Tragedy; she is short, and her features are neither delicate nor expressive, but her voice is sonorous, flexible, and sweetly melodious; her deportment is graceful, and her action judicious and picturesque.

We

We are now to notice an event, certainly the most important of her life, and by which the public amusement has been impoverished. We mean her marriage.

It was anticipated by many, who knew the inflammable nature of Mr. MERRY, that his tragedy of *Lorenzo* would bring on a passion for the heroine who so largely promoted its success.

They were not disappointed—a very short time after its appearance, the ingenious author made his declaration in form, and they were speedily married. Mr. MERRY has entered with his usual enthusiasm into the stormy sea of politics, and we believe his lady partakes in the fervid passion for liberty, which is now the governing principle of his mind.

His private friends regret this exclusive seduction of so rich an imagination, and think with regret upon the delightful companion which politics have taken from them—for when the name of MERRY was once mentioned, it stood for all that was elegant in manners, all that was dignified in friendship—every grace that could result from the sense and sensibilities of our nature.

" The rigid breath of freezing democrats
" Shook down his mellow hangings."

He is too sincere to feign a satisfaction which he does not feel, and lately, upon entering a neighbourhood, expressed to the gentry, by private message, that knowing his principles, if they could tolerate his society, he should be honoured by a friendly and equal intercourse.

The family of Mr. MERRY insisted upon Mrs. MERRY's quitting the stage, and she accompanied her husband to France;—but for the *heart* of MERRY, France soon became too sanguinary, and he is now residing in this country.

MR.

Mr. JOHNSTONE.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THE accomplishments of polite education are of less importance to Stage Candidates, than to the Candidates in any other profession, where so much natural talent is required. Strong mental faculties are of more utility to a Player, than Greek, Latin, or Metaphysics.

Dublin claims the honour of his birth. His mother being a dealer in *wall-fruit*, or more properly speaking, an old cloaths woman, was well known to Theatrical Gentlemen, who are generally very fond of second-hand finery; and thus did little JACK early commence a personal knowledge of the Sons of the Sock and Buskin. Pleased with their seeming grandeur, his mind became attached to so splendid a profession, and he enlisted under

under the banners of an Itinerant Company in Ireland.

The Stage is looked on with great contempt in the country parts of the sister kingdom; and as JOHNSTONE was a fine handsome fellow, he was frequently solicited by a Recruiting Serjeant, while in Athlone, to enter into his Majesty's service; but that honour our hero declined, until he was one day pursued for debt by a Bailiff, when he flew to his friend of the halbert, and accepted the bounty, thinking it better to carry a musket, than to be carried to jail.

He was several years in the Army, and divided his time in devotions to Mars and Venus; but too much freedom with the latter brought on an ill state of health, which, however, he resolved to turn to his advantage. He had long been sick of the trade of war, and now prevailed on the Surgeon, who was his friend, to represent him as totally incapable of duty, in consequence of which he was discharged.

He immediately set off for Dublin, and obtained an engagement in the Theatre, though at a small salary. Miss POICTIER, a daughter

ter of Mrs. THOMPSON, who made a conspicuous figure at Covent-Garden about twenty-four years ago, was then the favourite warbler in that city; and as she united with an excellent voice, a pretty person and unblemished character, our hero paid his addresses to her with great fervency, and not being easily discomfited, he soon prevailed on her to marry him.

From this period he gradually rose in public estimation as a Singer, until he and his wife took the lead in that department. He was always fond of play, and at one time had a dispute with the Marker at a Billiard Table, about ten shillings and a penny, which the latter said he owed for games; but JOHNSTONE not recollecting the circumstance, refused to pay it, though very often solicited. While performing in *Cymon*, where the verses of one of his songs conclued with, *Sing hey derry down! Sing hey derry down!* to his great astonishment, he was always answered by the Marker from the Gallery, with, *Pay me* JACK JOHNSTONE *my ten and a penny---my ten and a penny!*——This whimsical way of demanding payment proved very entertaining to the

the audience, and effectually forced our hero to comply.

In 1783 he was engaged, with his wife, for Covent-Garden, by Mr. HARRIS, and made his *debut* as *Lionel*, with considerable *eclat*. Mrs. JOHNSTONE was likewise very favourably received; but that Lady's emulation was soon subverted by the conduct of her husband, who became strongly attached to Mrs. WILSON, whose charms as an Actress were as much admired, as her character as a woman was detested. She used every art to seduce the affections of our hero: and as the liberality of Lord HINCHINBROKE enabled her to bestow valuable presents, she soon accomplished her design, and delighted in mortifying Mrs. JOHNSTONE, who took lodgings at Turnham-Green, purposely to absent herself from the painful scene. She died there a few months afterwards of a broken heart; yet during the whole of her illness she was never heard to blame either her husband or his paramour.

The finances of Mrs. WILSON were daily exhausting, and at last they became so low, that whether from lack of love or lack of money,

money, our hero deserted her. She died soon after at Shrewsbury, on her way to Ireland, unknown and friendless; and it was said, in great misery of mind—a just punishment for her infamy, particularly towards Mrs. JOHNSTONE.

Mr. JOHNSTONE, left now without any female connexion, became a very general lover, but always had an eye to interest; he at last found a Lady who had been settled in a handsome annuity by a *Friend*, and with her, we believe, he lived for several years:---indeed, his general attention to pecuniary matters has enabled him, as it is said, to oblige his acquaintance with sums of money on equitable principles, and to have placed him above the reach of poverty. He is lately married, with circumstances of honour to his feelings, and made amends by so doing for a wrong which is seldom repaired by the doer of it. He perhaps relaxes from the narrow bounds of solitary attachment, and his situation subjects him to so many adventures, that he must have more self-denial than his brethren, or less passion, if he were able to resist them.

He

He enjoys very high favour with the Public, yet gives himself very little trouble to deserve it. Both his natural and feigned voices are excellent; but so totally different, and separated by such a chasm, that when he passes from the one to the other, it is as if an Organist leapt at once from the *open diapason* to the small flute stop. This defect is highly represensible, because it is evidently curable. Were he to employ some time every day in *sol fa-ing*, the gulf would soon be filled up, and smooth, connected, and uncommonly extensive voice obtained.

Such practice too would improve him in other respects. His volubility and expression would receive that improvement which they want. He would be induced to pay more attention to *time*. He would learn in *ad libitum* passages to introduce something like a cadence, instead of a protracted squeal.

He is, we believe, a very good companion; and is frequently invited to the PRINCE of WALES's Parties; but that honour we must attribute rather to the melody of his voice than the sprightliness of his conversation.

In his person he is manly and handsome,

if

if we except his legs, which are uncommonly thick, and oblige him as often as possible to wear boots. He possesses great merit as an Actor; his deportment is easy and genteel, and his readings are the result of a good natural understanding. In the character of an *Irish Gentleman*, such as *Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan*, or *Major O'Flaherty*, he is extremely happy, and may be justly said to excell the celebrated MOODY.

Mrs. BLAND.

DRURY-LANE.

THE diurnal publications have acquired so much influence over the public mind, in Theatrical as well as Political affairs, that we see many Performers raised into great reputation by the panegyric of the Press. A tolerable portion of merit is sure to benefit by it; but the eulogium of a Newspaper counteracts its intent, if the subject praised is totally undeserving of it. Hence we find the Sons and Daughters of the Sock and Buskin deprecating the vengeance of those agreeable and instructive, but too often corrupt engines; and since it so ably accelerates their preferment, we must pardon their solicitude for a *Puff*.

The Lady before us was first introduced to public life by a *Puff*, though one of a different

ent description from that above alluded to. Mr. CADY, the Hair-dresser to the Royal Circus, heard and approved Miss ROMANZINI's voice, while she was a child; her vivacity was likewise conspicuous; and judging her capable of entertaining the Town as a Performer, he with little difficulty prevailed on her Mother, a poor Italian Jewess, to consent that she might be articled to the Managers, who being in want of Children to represent short recitative Pieces, readily engaged her, though at a very small income.

Little ROMANZINI was soon distinguished by her arch humour, and pretty manner of singing, from the rest of her cotemporaries. She gradually advanced in the opinion of the audience, and in the opinion of her employers, until she became the greatest favourite in her line at that place of amusement. Her mother, indeed, lamented the obligation she was under of breaking the Sabbath; but the necessity of obtaining a livelihood, she thought a sufficient justification.

When her term of probation expired, she was emulous to figure in more regular and re-

putable Dramas. Her talents had been spoken of in flattering language, and she was gladly accepted into Mr. DALY's Corps.—— The people of Dublin were delighted with her sprightliness; she gained upon them the oftener she was seen—and even the Manager, who dies for every lady he brings forward, felt, or feigned to feel a passion for this young Israelite: his visits and attention did not escape the timid eye of the mother, who, apprehensive that her daughter's virtue was in danger took Mr. DALY aside, and remonstrated nearly in the following words: —"*Vat dush you vant vit my little black ting? You are always running after and pulling my little black ting!—you have one very fine womans of your own, so I beg you will let my little black ting alone!*"—This check had the desired effect: Mr. DALY not thinking the lady worth making a noise about, gave up the chace.

When Mrs. WRIGHTEN thought proper to desert the Stage and her charming family, for a Vinegar Merchant in Tooley-street, the Managers of Drury-Lane found great difficulty in supplying the loss.—Among others, Miss ROMANZINI was engaged for that purpose,

pose, and she certainly has proved herself the best substitute. She soon ingratiated herself with the Public, particularly by her performance of the *Page, in Richard Cœur de Lion*; the song of "*The merry dance I dearly love,*" gave great *eclat* to her, as well as to the Piece, which is never performed without the most flattering testimonies of approbation.

In the Summer of 1789, she went to Liverpool, where she succeeded with the same facility she had done in London and Dublin. She not only performed on the Stage, but officiated in concerts; and eager to profit by the partiality of the inhabitants, she used all her cunning to procure a good Benefit. She knew there were a great number of Roman Catholics in the town, and that they liberally patronised those of their own persuasion; she therefore regularly displayed her devotion in their chapels. But a wicked Wag, by circulating the report of her being a Jewess, obliged her to sit sewing at her window every Saturday forenoon, to shew that she broke the Sabbath; and the better to contradict the assertions, he made her Mother buy a live pig in the evening, and go to every person

with whom she could pretend any business, and pulling the young *Sir Joseph* by the tail, tell that it was for the dinner of her and her little black ting the next day.

By this artifice, her most sanguine expectations were exceeded: and such were the emoluments she received, and the promises made her, that she refused to return to Drury-Lane without an increase of salary, as she was offered a very genteel engagement at the Concerts during the Winter. Her request was, however, refused; and after a few weeks deliberation, she thought it most prudent to return to London.

Since the above was written, this Lady has accepted the proffered hand of Mr. BLAND, the *brother* of Mrs. JORDAN.—We doubt not the advantages of the union to both parties—the lady certainly benefits highly by the countenance and influence of her sister-in-law, and her husband must conceive the salary of his wife a very comfortable accession to his fortune.

Mrs. BLAND has a fine voice, which is never, by aukward straining after bravura, thrown out of tune; her taste in music is pure and natural.

natural. Her manner is original; she does not conceive so boldly as others, but she *finishes* her work with greater neatness.—She has the grand secret of locking her notes together, which keeps the web of harmony to the end unbroken. Her characters are affectionate boys or pert girls, and she needs little criticism to be made unequalled in either: operatically we mean, for she, like STORACE, does not speak English.

Of late a very ridiculous attachment to a man of family has thrown some little stain upon her domestic character. The husband at first was severely affected; but mature reflection determined him to pass over an offence so venial in the Dramatic system.

Mr. SUETT.

DRURY-LANE.

MR. RICH. SUETT was born in London; and his father, who was a Butcher, for many years officiated in St. Paul's Cathedral, not in pointing out the road to Heaven, but in pointing out the beauties and curiosities of that noble building. It is possible that he still fills the same situation.

Whether the Hero of these Memoirs was initiated in any particular business we cannot exactly ascertain, but he is recollected, while a boy, to have performed a little part at the Hay-Market Theatre as his first essay; and to have sung at a Tea-Garden near the Borough.

Soon as he attained the appearance of manhood he became a votary of the Sock in the country,

country, and in the York Company he acquired the repute of an agreeable low Comedian, and a sober respectable young man.

He was contemporary with KEMBLE, and went to Edinburgh with that gentleman and the rest of the York company, where he gave equal satisfaction as in Yorkshire. The agility of Miss WEST, a Dancer in the Theatre, rather than her beauty, about this time, agitated his affections:——he paid her great attention, and it was generally believed by the members of the theatre, that he would marry her;——but when the proposal was made, though he did not decisively decline, yet he prevaricated, and shewed that though he admired the lady, his love was not so violent as to seduce him into matrimonial bonds.

He went for the Summer season to Liverpool; and Miss WEST, who inherits all the spirit of *Lady Pliant*, finding herself deserted, and sneered at by some of her fair friends, resolved on doing herself justice. She followed her faithless swain full of indignation,

dignation, and attacking him with the most commanding loquacity, frightened him to a compliance.

Prudence in a private, and considerable merit in a public capacity, together with the influence of some friends, recommended him to the Managers of Drury-Lane; and he made his first appearance in *Ralph* in *The Maid of the Mill*, eleven or twelve years ago. Though he did not greatly excite the admiration of the town, he displayed such talents as procured him an engagement.

Since his introduction to a London Audience, he has increased his fame, though slowly, and he now stands next to PARSONS in the particular line of acting, which he has most merit, old men and clowns. He is extremely thin in his person, and is a very good musician. In the country he was thought an excellent Singer, and he has performed *Lubin*, in *The Quaker*, and other vocal characters at Drury-Lane.

To the characters above enumerated may be added *Dorcas* in *Cymon*;---no man certainly ever approached so easily to an old woman.

MRS.

Mrs. WARD.

DRURY-LANE

IN the Drama, like other spheres of life, we see merit rise from the most obscure corners, and eclipse those who, by public approbation, and their own opinion, were unrivalled in the profession. It will, perhaps, scarcely be believed, that Mrs. WARD was formerly in such estimation at Liverpool, that she spurned the powers of our immortal SIDDONS, as inferior to her own, and repeatedly contended for tragic characters, in which she imagined herself more successful than the MELPOMENE of the present day. But great, very great indeed is the change! Mrs. SIDDONS has now reached the very summit of theatrical reputation, while Mrs. WARD must content herself with treading in the humbler characters of the Drama, and being considered as an useful, and not an excellent Actress.

Miss

Miss HOARE was a Mantua-maker in Liverpool, when she first was seized with the unappeasable itch for acting. Her exterior and her confidence impressed her friends with a high opinion of her talents; and before she had studied long, she was introduced to Mr. YOUNGER, who approving the specimens she gave him, brought her forward with every advantage that it is in the power of a Manager to give. She pleased her auditors, and in a short time ranked as the first Actress in the Company. Over Mr. YOUNGER, who always paid great deference to the fair sex, she acquired an uncontroulable ascendency, and insisted on a previous choice of parts to Mrs. SIDDONS, who was about that time engaged for Liverpool, from CHAMBERLAIN and CRUMP's Company.

Mr. Ward, who had formerly been a Printer in London, but who now figured as no inconsiderable Comedian in this company, conceiving a *penchant* for Miss HOARE, addressed, and married her; and Mr. YOUNGER, who was equally solicitous to promote the fortunes of others as to promote his own, obtained her an engagement in Drury-Lane Theatre, where

where, if she found less dignity in the Drama, she found a more solid gratification—a genteel salary.

On the first opportunity, Mr. YOUNGER likewise brought her husband to London, who, confident of his great powers, and eager to step at once into the first rank, selected *Ranger* for his *debut*, a character that requires various and rare talents, and a character about which Mr. WARD and the Public differed so widely in opinion of his performance, that he was immediately thrown on the shelf, as inadequate to the task he had undertaken; but had he attempted a less conspicuous line, in which he has considerable ability, he might, at this day, have been an approved Actor in London, instead of being discharged at the conclusion of the season.

On the death of Mr. YOUNGER, Mrs. WARD directed her attention with so much success towards his Successor, Mr. KING, that many eminent characters were given to her. *Jane Shore*, *Mrs. Lovemore*, and all parts next to Mrs. SIDDONS and Miss FARREN she represented. The applause bestowed on her was not, indeed, very great; but the town

town knew it was from necessity she was advanced, and while she was delighted with the consequences given her by the Author, the more celebrated Actresses were equally pleased with the conviction, that there was no danger of her attracting the attention of the House from their superior merits.

Mrs. WARD is sister to Mrs. SAGE, who some years ago went up in a Balloon from St. George's Fields. Her husband has, we believe, purchased a share in the Manchester Theatre. As he is obliged to perform in the country, and she will not relinquish her town engagement, they live very little together, but not the less happily.

In person, Mrs. WARD is rather tall and genteel; her deportment is easy, and not ungraceful; her countenance is naturally grave; and were it not for a weak, broken, disagreeable voice, she would be an Actress above mediocrity; but she can only be considered as useful. She very often performs and never offends; and is certainly a valuable Member of the Theatre.

Mr. BANNISTER, Jun.

DRURY-LANE.

THAT the instruction of skilful masters may render an attentive pupil tolerably successful, is admitted; but the gifts of Nature and the bent of Genius must operate in conjunction with Art, in order to compleat a great Dramatic Actor. Inclination may mislead, and partiality applaud first attempts; but time and contingencies will alone discover their true *forte* and real *merit*.

CHAPMAN, a celebrated Comedian, about fifty years ago, was remarkably fond of appearing in Tragedy, though little qualified to shine in it; and there are many now on the Stage who play one part to please an audience, and another to please themselves. That Mr. BANNISTER should sometimes depart from his proper sphere is excusable, when we re-

collect that he was originally encouraged by the greatest Actor ever known; but his discerning friends, nevertheless, regret his moderate success in Tragedy, who is so eminent in Comedy.

He is the son of Mr. C. BANNISTER, whose vocal powers are so universally admired. He received a good education, was designed for the profession of a Painter, and studied at the Royal Academy for some time with great assiduity.

His father, to encourage him, always presented a shilling for every new piece he produced, which were mostly heads; and whenever JACK was in want of money, he retouched one of his old drawings, knowing that his father's discrimination was not the most acute. One evening, being in want of a small sum, he made a few alterations in an old head, and carried it, in hopes of the usual *douceur*, to the Theatre, to his father, who was in waiting to go on the Stage: he pointed out various beauties but without receiving the gratuity;—he repeated his observations three or four times, but still without effect, until he was obliged to come to the point,

by

by begging the loan of a shilling, when his father somewhat warmly replied, "*Why demme, you are just like an Ordinary, come when you will, it's a shilling a head.*"

Our young Hero, however, saw something more agreeable in depicting life on the Stage than on canvas. The sedentary life of a Painter appeared by no means so enticing as the plaudits of an audience.

He made his first Essay in the *Apprentice*, at the Hay-Market Theatre, a part which he now performs with exquisite humour, and which he even then represented with ability: that procured him an engagement at Drury-Lane.

About this time Mr. GARRICK was desirous of reviving *Mahomet*; in which Mrs. ROBINSON, the late celebrated *Perdita*, was to personate *Palmyra*, and thought young BANNISTER would prove a good substitute for himself in the part of *Zaphna*, which he had formerly represented with wonderful success. For this purpose he instructed him in every line, gesture, and attitude, which gained him the reputation of a promising Tragic Actor; indeed, the late British Ros-

CIUS

CIUS predicted so much in his favour, and bestowed such pains and attention on his improvement, as induced the Public to give him credit for future eminence.

The death of GARRICK was a severe loss to him: it deprived him of an able instructor, and valuable friend. GARRICK was so partial to him, that he frequently sat in the Orchestra, to observe his performance. Mr. BANNISTER continued a buskined Hero several years after; occasionally appearing in *Hamlet*, *Romeo*, &c. &c. to Miss FARREN's *Juliet*, until his unexpected success in a speaking *Harlequin*, at the Hay-Market Theatre, suggested to him the idea of playing in Comedy: and he has certainly gathered more laurels from THALIA, than he could ever expect to do in the melancholy train of MELPOMENE.

He was much addicted to company and expence, when Mrs. LLOYD observed to him one day in the Hay Market Green Room, that a handsome young fellow like him should not waste his time in dissipation, and advised him to make love to Miss HARPER, who, if he could prevail, would make an excellent wife.

wife. He took the hint, and though at first he was not in earnest, yet he soon became strongly attached to that lady, and as she grew equally fond, after proving the sincerity of his affection, she married him.

If a man is fond of a woman, whatever his vicious habits may have been, it is in her power to reform him. Mrs BANNISTER, by the most gentle and endearing methods changed our Hero from a professed Rake to a tender, prudent, and fond Husband; and we may add, that no couple enjoy more domestic felicity, or are more deserving the wealth they have already acquired, and are daily acquiring.

The dramatic powers of Mr. BANNISTER are now to be noticed otherwise than incidentally. He is an Actor, who perhaps stands higher in the public favour than any man now living. When a fame so high is obtained, it becomes a matter of curiosity to examine how it has been acquired, and by what merits it is sustained.

If we be desired to say whence in our judgment his popularity springs, our general answer is from his constant vivacity and whimsical

sical extravagance, from the hilarity of his countenance and the unimposing size of his person. He is an Actor who makes you think you are embarked with him in a party of pleasure; he is not *this* character nor *that*, for always he is BANNISTER; but he resolves to divert and entertain you. If chaste acting will raise the laugh, which is his object, he will not be farcical; but if it fails, he scruples rarely any extravagance of action or burlesque mummery of language.

As the best proof, BANNISTER takes no part in the various drama of SHAKESPEARE —his name rarely adds strength to any but a modern play, which is written to his powers, and unusual latitude allowed. Candour, however, will admit, that such pieces depend upon him.—Farce, in truth, is his element, and his burletta *singing* is very tolerable.—EDWIN, unhappily for BANNISTER, was a Musician.

Let us, abstracting ourselves from the fascination of success, ask coolly in what performances BANNISTER is excellent—will the answer go beyond the following? The *Sailor* in *No Song no Supper*---*Dr. Lenitive* in *The Prize*

Prize---The *Servant* in *The Children in the Wood*, and a few others.

To these, and such as these, in which he *is* excellent, numbers may be added, and those all which he *does* represent, wherein he is *respectable* if not great; and if he does not surprise and delight, you dismiss the *character* from your mind, and are glad to see BANNISTER.

MRS.

Mrs. MARTYR.

COVENT-GARDEN.

IT has been asserted by very good judges, that a certain degree of diffidence and timidity is absolutely necessary to excite the attention, and call forth the talents of Theatrical Candidates; but it must be admitted, that too violent an agitation of the spirits rather damps than displays merit; and on the contrary, that a total insensibility argues a want of feeling, incompatible with true enlightened genius.

Mrs. MARTYR, with an easy indifference, rattles through her parts, and sometimes gets applause, but apparently very seldom takes pains to deserve it. With an excellent voice, a pretty figure, and a sprightly agreeable face, she has been near fourteen years on the

the Stage, without making much improvement.

She is daugher to Mr. THORNTON, formerly a reputable Taylor in Southampton-Buildings. At an early period she shewed a fondness for public amusements and company; and having a fine musical voice, she became passionately desirous of being heard in public, sanguinely believing it would procure her great reputation, and place her among the favourite Performers of the town---the great object of her ambition.

Her first introduction to general notice was at Vauxhall, where her powers were very much commended; and she was engaged the following season for Covent-Garden Theatre.

Rosetta was the part fixed on for her *debut*; nor were her efforts passed over in silence by the audience.

Miss THORNTON being young, pretty, and agreeable---possessed of a charming voice, and an unblemished character, made some noise in the theatrical world;---and, as is usually the case with handsome Actresses whose faces are new to the Public, she was surrounded by a long list of beaux, but Captain

tain MARTYR's suit being honourable, she married him.

Her conjugal virtues were often impeached, and her partiality for MAHON, was very freely talked of in the *Green-Room*. The animadversions having reached the ears of her husband, Captain MARTYR reprobated his licentious tongue in very severe terms. This produced a rupture that proceeded to blows in an open Coffee-Room; but the Captain, considering his antagonist, who was a Musician, beneath him, refused to meet him in the field.———He was stigmatized as a coward, his wife openly deserted him, and he was soon after imprisoned in the King's Bench for debt, where he died.

Her amour with Mr. HARRIS was productive of great warmth; and being communicated to several members of the Theatre, amused them for some time. Report says she has been offered settlements by different gentlemen; but hers is not a *passion* that *money* can gratify. She now lives with Mr. PARKE, the celebrated *Oboe Player*.

In her profession she seems to despise all art, and depends entirely on her natural abilities

lities. She is a neat breeches figure, and acquired great fame as the *Page* in the *Follies of a Day*. Her sprightliness and smile, which she most liberally displays, always insure her a favourable reception; but she is not, nor probably never will be, a first-rate Actress or Singer.

MR HOLMAN.

COVENT-GARDEN.

IF ancestry be a merit, Mr. HOLMAN has that to boast of:—he is descended from Sir JOHN HOLMAN, of Warkworth Castle, Banbury.——The fortune, unluckily for Mr. HOLMAN, adheres to the female line.

His family has in general had a strong military attachment. In the Rebellion of 1714 his great-grandfather fought under the Duke of ARGYLE, and fell in the battle of Dunblaine. His grandfather rendered Government much service in the Rebellion of 1745. His father (who died before Mr. HOLMAN was two years of age) was an Adjutant in a regiment of Militia.

Mr. HOLMAN received his education in the Soho Academy, under the tuition of the Reverend Dr. BARVIS. In 1780 he entered an independent member of Queen's College, Oxford,

Oxford, and still has the honour of belonging to that honourable Society.

Mr. HOLMAN was designed for the Church, and his making the Stage his profession was an idea adopted long after his matriculation; an idea inculcated and encouraged in him by men of the highest literary and moral estimation, who held that idea of the Stage, which must ever dwell in liberal and enlightened minds.

Mr. GARRICK was present at HOLMAN's performance of *Hamlet* at school, and paid him many encomiums on his early excellence in dramatic representation.

Mr. HULL, too, witnessed his juvenile endeavours, and gave that testimony of his theatric merit, which we believe a more intimate knowledge of his ripened talents has not inclined him to deviate from.

Mr. HOLMAN's first appearance was in the character of *Romeo*, which we think was an admirable choice—his youth, figure, and features, so well corresponding with the idea we form of that Prince of Lovers.—His success was great; and Mr. HARRIS engaged him on handsome terms. He conti-

nued three years in London, when some difference about an increase of salary occasioned his quitting Covent Garden Theatre.

Prior to his engaging in Dublin for the ensuing Winter, he passed some time at Oxford, for the purpose of taking his first degree, when he delivered an oration which received much commendation for its elegant latinity.—His conduct in the University is spoken of in more than common terms of approbation. His strict attention to college duties gained him so much the marked esteem of the Head and Fellows, that his degree was not only granted him immediately on his application, but conferred with marks of particular compliment.

Mr. HOLMAN proceeded from Oxford to Dublin, where he performed on very advantageous terms throughout the Winter. He had already passed three summers there, and his friends (among whom were many of the first characters in that kingdom) rendered what portion of his time was undevoted to his profession, as agreeable as refined society could make it.

Resolving to render his absence from London

don as profitable as possible—he not only visited Edinburgh for the first time (where he was much caressed as an Actor and Scholar) but also performed at Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, and other capital towns in England.

Mr. HARRIS, who has ever manifested a friendship for HOLMAN, wished to see him again in his situation at Covent-Garden, and HOLMAN was anxious again to inlist under the banners of his first Manager.—This mutual inclination produced a renewal of engagement at Covent Garden, which will doubtless be a permanent one.

This gentleman has great requisites for the Stage.---He has a very elegant figure, and a voice which is so powerful without effort, and extensive in its compass, that except in the pathetic it attains with the utmost ease every thing which dramatic art requires.

It not unfrequently happens, that we are driven into extremes, from a wish to avoid imitation. The elevated and yet level monotone of KEMBLE, in whom this is in a great measure a necessity, has hurried Mr. HOLMAN into elevations and depressions of voice

not at all times strictly natural. There is a musical scale of speaking as well as singing. The regular and tardy delivery of the former actor has also precipitated the utterance of Mr. HOLMAN beyond the demands of passion; and though he is always articulate, he appears too frequently in haste. Some of KEMBLE's action he adopts---like him he is fond of striking the breast---he does it however more frequently than KEMBLE.

His excellencies take their root in his own temper, feelings, and habits. He is always gentlemanly, shewy, and generous. In the grandeur of his heroes there is no swell beyond his bulk. In the situation of CHAMONT he had been the character. His HAMLET is thoroughly princely; he does not sink the gentleman in the scholar and the madman.

To his many praises very fine declamation must be added, and no Actor of the present times can pretend to speak a Prologue, seriously impressive, with HOLMAN.

Mrs. ESTEN.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THE Art of Dramatic Acting requires more bodily and less mental perfection in its votaries than any other: an elegant person, a beautiful face, a powerful melodious voice, a tolerable ear, and a good share of confidence, are gifts of such importance upon the Stage, that their possessor must be *mentally* below mediocrity, if he or she does not arrive at considerable eminence: on the contrary, we find those qualities of little or no use to the Philosopher, the Painter, or the Poet:---it is mind alone that can distinguish them for superiority above their competitors. An Actor, with a quick ear and a good memory, may be taught to prate and to move like a parrot or a puppet, and may display

such beauties of eloquence and graces of deportment as charm an English audience; yet not one of those beauties or graces may be the result of his own studies. This axiom, we believe, is strongly illustrated in Mrs. ESTEN, who, were it not for the instructions of her Mother, might probably have been unheard of in the Theatrical Annals of this Metropolis.

This Lady is a natural daughter of the late Admiral PYE, by Mrs. BENNET, Authoress of *Anna, Juvenile Indiscretions*, and other esteemed Novels; indeed, she has acquired considerable and merited reputation in that line of writing. Miss BENNET having a brother in the Navy, through his introduction became acquainted with several gentlemen in the same profession, and she captivated the heart of Mr. ESTEN, Purser of a Man of War. But acting under the government, and directed by the experience of her Mother, who regretted her *Juvenile Indiscretions*, she did not suffer passion to get the better of prudence. Mr. ESTEN married her; they lived together some years in a domestic and happy state, and two little-ones were the fruits

fruits of their mutual fondness; but Mr. ESTEN, desirous to procure the means of supporting so expensive an establishment as a numerous family, adventured in some undertakings which proved unsuccessful; his finances were ruined, and his wife was necessarily returned upon the hands of her Mother. What Mr. ESTEN's pursuits now are we know not, nor have we heard that he has been with our Heroine since she made her *debut* on the London Stage.

From Mrs. BENNET's disposition towards Literature and Fiction, the Drama naturally came often under her consideration; and from her Mother Mrs. ESTEN imbibed an attachment towards this favourite amusement, which her circumstances soon suggested to her the probability of turning to pecuniary advantage. The riches and reputation to be acquired on the Stage have dazzled and deluded the fancy of sounder heads than Mrs. ESTEN's, and therefore we need not be surprized if she determined on a pursuit which not only promised the possession of those, but also the greatest admiration of her beauty—

a passion almost inseparable from the female sex.

Mr. DAWES, a gentleman of the Long Robe, was the first before whom she rehearsed in private, with a view of becoming a public Performer. Prepossessed, perhaps by her personal charms, he pronounced highly in her favour. Others saw and approved her talents; and, as the last step towards her becoming an Actress, she was introduced to Mr. HARRIS; but his opinion of her abilities was not encouraging enough to bring her forward in London even upon trial. She was, however, recommended to Bath, where she was assured of an opportunity of becoming a candidate for dramatic fame.

Upon the speculation of her daughter's abilities Mrs. BENNET took a house in that fashionable city, and MIS. FSTEN made her *entrée* upon the Stage as *Belvidera* about five or six years ago. She dressed the character in a most picturesque and elegant manner, and, aided by beauty, she made a very favourable impression upon the Bath audience: she continued to perform in that city and in Bristol for a season or two, where she

she had an abundance of managerial aid (Mr. DIAMOND preferring petite Actresses, as they agree best with his own figure); but her benefit at Bristol happening to fall upon the night of the day on which there was a grand sailing match, the *aquatic* diversion so materially diminished the Theatrical in point of spectators, that, instead of clearing, she lost money by the night.

Whether Mrs. ESTEN's Benefit was fixed for this unfortunate night by accident or design, we cannot state; but she attributed it to the latter; and all the eloquence and virulence of her Mother's pen were immediately engaged to interest the People of Bristol in her favour against the Managers: but the effect failed; and after such hostility it may naturally be concluded that Mrs. ESTEN was discharged.

Her abilities, although they then were by no means so deserving of admiration as they are now, were sufficiently eminent to procure her an engagement in Dublin, where her very *looks* must have made the Manager her friend. At this time her Mother taught her in every point the art of succeeding; from the pencil-

ing of the eye-brows and eye-lashes, the beautifying her face, and the moving her arms, to the manner of speaking the most difficult passage of SHAKESPEARE. By practice, and the instructions of Mrs. BENNET, she greatly improved her talents, and was soon afterwards engaged for Edinburgh, where she was received as one scarcely inferior to Mrs. SIDDONS or Mrs. JORDAN.

Her very great fame at Edinburgh soon reached London; and although Mr. HARRIS was not much inclined to alter his first opinion of her, yet he agreed she should have a trial: and Mrs. ESTEN, relying with the greatest confidence on her own abilities, thought there only wanted a trial to confirm her superiority. Accordingly she made her first appearance in London at Covent-Garden Theatre, October 1790, in the character of *Rosalind* in *As You Like It*; and her success was so extremely flattering, that it justified her most sanguine expectations. The prodigality of applause gave hopes that she would draw crowds during the season, but her attraction continued a few nights only. She attempted the favourite and various characters

ters in which Mrs. SIDDONS, Mrs. JORDAN, and Miss FARREN, were most admired, and although she fell short of all those great Actresses, yet her performances were much above mediocrity. Like Mr. JOHN PALMER she was allowed to be agreeable in almost every part, but to possess excellence in very few. She performed during the whole season without receiving any salary, but with the indulgence of appearing in whatever characters she chose; and towards the conclusion, in addition to a tolerable share of public esteem, she received a *free Benefit*.

But with all this success her talents were not thought sufficient to procure her a handsome engagement in Covent-Garden Theatre, and she at this time would probably have been in Dublin or Edinburgh, had it not been for the friendship of Mrs. JORDAN. Every exertion was made by Mrs. ESTEN'S friends to influence the Managers in her favour; and although she has some noble patrons, yet the object was not accomplished, until Mr. COUTTS the Banker requested the Duke of C--R--CE to write to Mr. HARRIS in her favour. His Highness consulted Mrs.

JORDAN,

JORDAN, whose natural disposition prompted her to serve our Heroine, and the Royal letter was not a simple recommendation;—it had the desired effect, and Mrs. ESTEN was engaged at eleven pounds per week.

This Lady is so great a favourite, and has so many friends in Edinburgh, that the Theatre in that city being to be disposed of, a warm contest arose between the great personages who rule the Drama there, whether Mrs. ESTEN be the Manageress or Mr. STEVEN KEMBLE the Manager. It has been since accommodated. Mrs. ESTEN, for a valuable consideration, relinquished her pretensions, and Mr. KEMBLE is now Manager.

Though rather small, yet Mrs. ESTEN's person is extremely neat; and in men's cloaths she is very well, although she would be much better if at the knees her limbs were more straight. Her face is beautiful, and she is perfect mistress of the use of a fine pair of eyes, which, those who pretend to be in the secrets of the toilet say, she heightens greatly by the exercise of art upon her eye-brows and eye-lashes, and the languishing rollings of which

which every one who has been near her must acknowledge the charm. Her voice, like Mrs. SIDDON'S, is well calculated for Tragedy, but is not sufficiently feminine for the gay scenes of the Comic Muse: her action and deportment are graceful and easy, and her articulation and comprehension of the sense of the author deserve great commendation. But for most of those qualifications she is principally indebted to the judgment and drillings of her Mother, who is a woman of more than common shrewdness and ability. Those who saw Mrs. ESTEN'S *debut* at Bath, are astonished at her present excellence; and those who know both her and Mrs. BENNET ascribe it wholly to the instructions of the latter.

It is not our design to blame Performers for using every fair means of enhancing their value, but when they attempt to pull down others, for the purpose of raising themselves, they certainly deserve reproach. The fulsome panegyrics on Mrs. ESTEN, published daily in the public prints, might here have passed unnoticed, were it not that, in order to give lustre to herself, she is reported to have encouraged

couraged the sullying of Mrs. JORDAN. If this be true, we can only account for it in the piece of service conferred on Mrs. ESTEN, by Mrs. JORDAN's interference with a Royal D—ke in her favour; for nothing is more just than the old maxim, that we often hate those to whom we are obliged.

And since the subject of Newspaper panegyric, vulgarly called *puffing*, is started, we will here relate an occurrence in general circulation, which may, for aught we know, be more entertaining than true.—Some time ago Mrs. BENNET drew up a very elaborate eulogium upon her daughter's performance of a new part, and sent it to a confidential Print long before the curtain had risen, with the promise of *three* guineas for its insertion; and it appeared accordingly next day. But a Critic, who had gone to see the Play in the way of business, added to it great praises on Mr. LEWIS and Mr. QUICK. This displeased our Heroine and her Mother so much, that they refused to pay more than *one* guinea, and referred to Messrs. LEWIS and QUICK for the other *two*.

To those who enquire minutely into things, it has occasioned some surprize, that upon an income from the Stage, not exceeding six or seven hundred pounds per annum, Mrs. ESTEN should be enabled to keep her carriage, footmen, &c. and live in a very splendid style. But it is improper that such curious people should know every thing—although, indeed, Mrs. ESTEN does not, and for any thing we know, has no reason to make a secret of any of her actions. Her mother is a clever, experienced woman, and the Public may rest assured, that, like most of her theatrical sisterhood, Mrs. ESTEN is not without a *Friend*.

Since the above was written, the *Lady* in question has drawn the knot still closer which ties to her beauty the illustrious descendant of the great DOUGLAS; a bond of a thousand pounds per annum has been received for the surrender of the *fort*, and the *virtuous* receiver exults in the splendour, if not the credit of high life.

She has a most elegant house in Half-Moon Street, Piccadilly;—her carriage and appointments are in the first style; and often does the

the *graced* balcony display to indignant virtue the source from which flows so meretricious a grandeur!

Report states that she has lately added to the race of DOUGLAS.

Mrs. BENNET, the forming power of so finished a work of art, has quitted *Nassau-street*, to be near the object of her perfected hopes. In the daily contemplation of such successful artifice how will her bosom swell with transport!

> "For she is of her offspring dearest far,
> "In her *own* hemisphere the polar star."

And happy must be a PARENT with such enlarged ideas, and so liberal an indulgence! --Happy the LITERARY CHARACTER, which led to such a magnificent elevation!—but, above all measure, happy a PUBLIC, which can see, not surely without due emotions, a beauteous *Dutchess* confronted by an *Adultress*, and the blood of ancient nobility mixing with the purulent puddle of an *illicit intercourse!*

Mr. BERNARD.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THIS Gentleman is, perhaps, the only one who adopted the profession of Actor by accident. With his mind full bent on a very different line of life, we find him at an early period, before he could be supposed to follow the dictates of reason, bewitched into the train of THESPIS, by the charms of a buxom Nymph of the *Buskin*.

He was born in Portsmouth. His father, who was a Gunner, and afterwards a Lieutenant on board a man of war, intended him for the Navy, and procured him admission into the Academy in Dock, where he was not less diligent in his studies than delighted with the profession he expected to be engaged in. But his father, who looked towards the dignity

nity of Post Captain, and whose temper was too haughty to ask a favour, and too ambitious to brook neglect, grew disgusted with the Navy, when he found his services go unrewarded. In the height of his indignation he withdrew his son from that excellent seminary, and placed him as superintendant of his mother's business, who kept two or three shops in Portsmouth and Dock.

The drudgery of a counting-house, or a counter, so ill agreed with a mind which had already anticipated many glorious victories over the *French*, that after suffering the ignoble toil for a short time, our young hero collected a few valuables, and set off, intending to go on board some vessel, either at Plymouth or Bristol. When he arrived at Chard, in Somersetshire, he met with a small Company of Players, and having performed *George Barnwell* at school, he performed *Lothario* here for his amusement. A member of this corps invited him to go to Taunton to visit a Company performing there, and our young run-away was so much smitten with the charms of one of the Actresses, that he enlisted

enlisted into the same service, on purpose to be near her.

The Taunton Company soon afterwards went to Weymouth, where Mrs. BERNARD discovered her son, although he went by another name. She brought him back to Portsmouth, and purchased him a place in the Victualing-Office, which he held for more than a year, until the frenzy for acting, which now fully possessed him, destroyed every consideration but the Stage.

A second time he joined an *Itinerant Corps* in the West of England, and without being addicted to dissipation, a few months obliged him to part with every thing that would raise money, as his theatrical emoluments seldom exceeded four or five shillings per week. When reduced to distress, he wrote to his mother, who, from time to time, remitted him not only money, but other very agreeable presents; and thus was he rendered more comfortable than his brethren.

A lucrative benefit—that is, five or six guineas clear profit—enabled him to gratify an old wish of seeing London, where he visited the Theatres several nights, but was soon

soon obliged, by the want of money, to join a small Company at Epping and Dunmow, in Essex. Here his income was less than ever, and all the principal characters were engaged by the Manager and his family, who had seized every part that was conspicuous, whether it was suited to their age or abilities. Mr. BERNARD's talents were not, however, passed over in silence; and as he could sing, a neighbouring Manager offered him the enormous terms of *half a guinea* per week, and a clear benefit, which was most greedily accepted.

From this moment he gradually advanced in reputation and profit. The Managers of the Norwich Company hearing a very favourable report of his talents, engaged him at twenty-five shillings per week. He conceived a *penchant* for Miss ROBERTS, the Mrs. SIDDONS of that Company, and married her. He performed principal parts in *Operas* and *Comedies*, and soon became a very great favourite with the town.

From Norwich he again went into the West of England, where Mrs. BERNARD's merit made so much noise, that Mr. PALMER, now

of

of the Post-Office, but then Manager of the Bath Theatre, went to Weymouth, and requested that she might perform *Calista*, with which he was so highly pleased, that he made them both very liberal offers; but it was many months before they could be accepted without breaking their agreement with the Weymouth Manager.

In light Comedy Mr. BERNARD soon became a particular favourite with the Bath Audience; and he had the honour of being a principal in instituting the Musical Society at the White Lion, which being the most eminent in the kingdom, we will give a short history of its rise.

Sir JOHN DANVERS, who is fond of observing the different manners of the different classes of mankind, requested Mr. BERNARD to take him to a Club of reputable tradesmen, where nothing above malt liquor was suffered to circulate, and where the principal entertainment was singing *Catches* and *Glees*. Sir JOHN was so much pleased with the conviviality of the evening, that he regretted the want of a more elegant Society on the same plan. He desired BERNARD to write letters,

in his name, to several Noblemen and Gentlemen, proposing the scheme; to which some of them immediately acceded. Sir JOHN presented the Society with an excellent organ, and appointed Mr. BERNARD to be Secretary. The number of Members was soon after increased from forty to one hundred. RAUZZINI officiated at the organ, and the Vocal Performers in the town always officiated in the *Glees*; even the celebrated HARRISON has taken a part in them. A permission to visit the Musical Society became an object of desire, and often difficulty, to the first Nobleman in the place. The strictest order was observed. It meets once a week, and it is now the first institution of the kind in this country. Mr. BERNARD had rendered himself a favourite on the Stage; respectable off it; and his emoluments were very considerable, when Mr. HARRIS engaged him for Covent-Garden, where he made his *debut* as *Archer* in the *Beaux Stratagem*, in October 1787, and acquitted himself with great credit.

Since that time he has confined himself to the Characters of Fops in light Comedy.

Fribble,

Fribble, Jack Meggot, Sir Brilliant Fashion, &c. he has represented with success; indeed there is a light neatness in his figure, countenance, and manner, that is happily adapted to parts in genteel Comedy. Sensible of the great merit of Mr. LEWIS, he is content with performing the characters under him, and that gentleman would scarce find a better second.

Since the above was written, Mr. BERNARD retired for two years from Covent-Garden, and MARSHALL, from the Norwich Theatre,

"Reigned in his stead."

But he is restored this season (1794) to his former situation, and made his first appearance in *Cloten*, in *Cymbeline*.

Mr. BERNARD is Proprietor and Manager of the Plymouth Theatre, where he performs every Summer. The care he takes to provide actors of merit for that town, and the attention he shews to them, have not only made him popular with the inhabitants, but, what is more difficult, have made him beloved by those of his own profession.

Mr. BARRYMORE.

DRURY-LANE.

THE Stage holds out various inducements to its followers. The majority of Theatrical *Enthusiasts*, we believe, attempt it from foolish pride and ill-directed ambition; some few from necessity, and others from the prospect it holds out of idleness and dissipation. The London Drama holds such captivating views of opulence, luxury, and splendor, that numerous adventurers are induced to engage in Provincial Companies, in the hope that a little country practice will qualify them for the capital; and so general a passion is *Vanity* in the human breast, that the meanest Player of the poorest country town entertains ideas, and cherishes the hope, of one day attracting crowds in those dramatic emporiums, Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden.

Mr.

Mr. BARRYMORE's father, whose name is BLEWIT, is a Hair-dresser in Taunton, and had placed him at Mr. LADBROKE's Counting-house, which, like the celebrated POWELL, he quitted for the profession of the Sock and Buskin. Perhaps the great success of his predecessor, together with his own dislike of business, and love of pleasure, operated on his mind more strongly than any predilection for acting. A natural turn for conviviality ill accorded with his situation, and occasioned a total neglect of *Cocker*; which, with pecuniary embarrassment, soon turned the balance, and confirmed his resolution of becoming a Player.

His first exhibition was in the West of England; but so very small were his emoluments, that they scarce afforded him a subsistence.

His genteel appearance and pompous address, however, impressed the inkeepers with an opinion of his consequence, and he is said to have contracted debts with much less difficulty than he discharged them. In different companies he experienced the like obstacles, which he obviated in a similar manner, until

he was seen at Brighton by Mr. COLMAN, where, contrasted with the wretched exertions of his brother Actors, he appeared to the modern TERENCE possessed of powers that might be useful in London, and he was accordingly engaged for the Hay-Market Theatre.

But the best judges are sometimes mistaken; and Mr. COLMAN, who had selected our Hero for his vocal powers, soon repented his bargain; and he was dismissed with a pecuniary compensation, in lieu of performance.

The approbation of Mr. COLMAN, however, having reached the ears of the Proprietors of Drury-Lane Theatre, they engaged Mr. BARRYMORE in the hour of their distress, occasioned by the loss of Mr. DU BELLAMY, who thought proper to retire from a London Stage. Prior to this, he had applied to Mr. LINLEY, and had been rejected.

Like many others, Mr. BARRYMORE began his career in a line for which Nature had not very liberally qualified him. He made his first essay in *Young Meadows*, in *Love in a Village*; but

but his reception only gave hopes of supporting the singing parts with mediocrity, until a gentleman of merit could be found; and though the Managers expected no benefit from his musical attraction, yet still they thought he would be worth an inconsiderable salary as an Actor.

In this state of insignificance he remained several years, appearing occasionally in Comedies, Tragedies, Operas, Farces, &c. until a favourable opening occurred by the removal of Mr. FARREN, who went to Covent-Garden. Mr. BARRYMOYE was immediately invested with most of his parts, which were not considerable; and by his spirited performance of *Carlos*, in *Isabella*, he first made a favourable impression on the Public. Soon after this, Mr. BANNISTER, Jun. being indisposed at a time when he should have personated *Charles Oakly*, in the *Jealous Wife*, our Hero offered to read that part at a very short notice. An apology was made to the audience, and accepted. Mr. BARRYMORE accordingly began, with the part in his hand, but put it in his pocket in the second act. This pleased and astonished all present; and

as he played the character extremely well, he was rewarded with the most loud and flattering applause.

These fortunate events operated greatly in his favour, and were attended with an increase of salary. About this time he married the daughter of an Oilman, in Bloomsbury.

The death of Mr. BRERETON, and the desertion of Mr. PALMER, concurred still farther to his advancement, which he accelerated by an obsequious demeanour, and insinuating flattery. He is now accumulating money, in which he is assisted by his old Master Mr. LADBROKE, who always makes a great party on his Benefit night.

From the preceding circumstances it will appear, that he has been pushed into notice more by good fortune than merit, though his abilities are of a nature to catch general applause: his figure and face are unexceptionable, and his voice clear and strong. His action and deportment are constrained; and he has never been able to divest himself of the aukward strut acquired when strolling. He discovers little mental faculties, and supplies

plies the want of discrimination, by a strong emphasis and animated manner, sometimes bordering on the *rant*; but, upon the whole, he is considered as a very tolerable second-rate Actor.

MR. DARLEY.

COVENT-GARDEN.

A FINE voice is so strong a recommendation to a Theatrical Candidate, that every defect is overlooked, and it alone, if united with a good ear and assiduity, is certain of bringing emolument and fame to its possessor. The coarse robustness of Mrs. KENNEDY, was entirely forgot when her powerful correct melody was heard; and no man's appearance would disqualify him more from attempting the Stage, where every movement of the person is so conspicuous, than DARLEY's, were it not that he is blessed with a most clear, strong, and various voice.

It was neither THALIA nor MELPOMENE, but TERPSICHORE, that first bewitched him into

into a public life. ——Bred a Buckle-maker in Birmingham, his ideas would probably never have soared beyond the sound of the *file* and *hammer*, had not his vocal powers acquired him great celebrity among his shop-mates and pot-companions. Stimulated by praise and inclination, he panted for the honour of being a public Singer; and with no other qualifications than his own natural pipe and a few lessons, he offered himself a candidate for the favour of the town, at the Birmingham Vauxhall; but whether from a knowledge of his favourite occupation, the uncouthness of his appearance, or that he had not studied the art of Music, he was considered as a piece of *base metal*, and notwithstanding the universality of that article among his auditors, his *sounds* were not approved of.

He was not, however, discomfited by his unpropitious onset; no one could deny the excellence of his voice, and he hoped to refine his taste by practice. He therefore engaged himself in the Theatre, where, though his exertions were not more applauded than they had been at Vauxhall, yet he was not

obliged to come so singularly forward. In this last situation he was noticed by some of the London Performers, who recommended him about fifteen years ago as a Chorus Singer to Covent-Garden.

In London he laboured many years in obscurity, until a slight familiarity with our best Singers enabled him to display his natural powers, without shocking the ears of musical Amateurs. Occasional accidents brought him forward, particularly one evening, when "*Sweet Poll of Plymouth*" was loudly called for during the performance of the *Positive Man*, and in Mrs. KENNEDY's absence he came forward and sung it with such *eclat*, as recommended him to the encouragement of the Managers and favour of the Public.

When Mr. C. BANNISTER succeeded RHEINOLD, and afterwards had returned to his old masters at Drury-Lane, DARLEY was the only Bass Singer left at Covent-Garden, and from necessity he was put into all the first-rate Characters, in which he acquitted himself with credit, and gradually ingratiated himself into the esteem of the audience.

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He is very corpulent, and his appearance strikes us rather with an idea of his being a jolly Publican or Butcher, than an Actor. He has improved himself very much in musical execution, and has now acquired a tolerable shake and taste in his cadences: indeed were it not for the aukward vulgarity of his person, he would bid fair to rival C. BANNISTER in public estimation.

MRS.

Mrs. ACHMET.

IT is the duty of a Biographer to veil the early foibles of those whose subsequent conduct inclines to virtue. To reproach the penitent is to deter from reformation. They should be gently, and even courteously, deprived of their ill habits; nor should the insolence of ostentatious purity ever wound them; they should be allured into love of the change, and not again driven into vice by austerity and mortification.

To mention Mrs. ACHMET's early situation would be malevolent, were her conduct still irreproachable. Publicly known as Miss EGAN, of an *easy* and *obliging* temper, the debauchees of Dublin celebrated her beauty; and the turn of her mind suggested to Mr. WHITE, who had studied under the veteran SHERIDAN,

SHERIDAN, the idea of introducing her on the Stage. Mr. WHITE was entrusted with some little authority in Smock-Alley Theatre; he over-rated his abilities as a Teacher of Acting, and, pleased to find his pupil favourably received, he attributed to his instructions what was really owing to her own beauty.

The supposed success of Mr. WHITE's skill operated, however, in Mrs. ACHMET's behalf; that gentleman extolled her talents in every company to which he had access. In a Summer tour to Belfast, she was likewise improved by LEE LEWES, and in a short time she acquired considerable reputation as an Actress. Her charms, aided by the advantageous station of the Stage, kindled a flame in the breast of Mr. ACHMET, who took her into keeping; and as that Gentleman's memoirs are rather extraordinary, a digression into them, we trust, will here prove very agreeable.

Mr. ACHMET, whose real name is CAIRNS, was born in the North of Ireland, where he served an apprenticeship to an Apothecary, and afterwards engaged as a shopman in the same

same profession, in Dublin. His disposition was not at all adapted to still life; and eager to ramble, or what is mis-termed *to see the world*, he deserted the counter, and engaged himself as a Surgeon to a privateer. In that capacity he experienced many difficulties; was taken prisoner by the French, and we believe, he voluntarily entered into the squadron of THUROT, and landed with that enterprising adventurer on different parts of the Irish coast, so the great terror of the natives.

Whether he was dissatisfied with a sea-life or apprehensive of falling into the hands of his countrymen, he thought it prudent to desert the French service, and making the best of his way to London, the great Theatre for talents of every description, he engaged himself as an attendant in some very elegant Baths, on which his own reflections suggested many improvements. Hoping to turn his observations to advantage, he visited Dublin, intending to erect a set in that city, and communicated his plan to Mr. JEBB, and one or two other Gentlemen of the Faculty.

Those

Those gentlemen agreed that his scheme was very good, but doubted its success, unless he assumed the character and garb of a Turk. To this Mr. CAIRNS assented, though without any other qualification than a confident assurance. He took the name of ACHMET, and opened a subscription, which was soon filled in the most liberal manner: he built his Baths in an ingenious and superb style; and the popularity of his undertaking exceeded his most sanguine expectations.

Being tall and handsome in his person, his dress and solemnity imposed upon the mob; but he found great difficulty in deceiving men of enlightened minds, who sometimes questioned him as to his avowed place of nativity, and wondered at his genuine Irish brogue. To such enquiries he replied with a sigh, and begged that his own country might not be mentioned, as the recollection of his sufferings in it distracted his thoughts and depressed his spirits. In this manner he attempted to evade discovery; and though the majority of the inhabitants in Dublin believed him to be a good Ottoman, yet the discerning few laughed heartily at the deceit; and as his

Baths

Baths were completely elegant and useful, they were resorted to by crowds of the first rank. He gave them up two days in the week to the poor, gratis: he was making a fortune, and in every respect deserved that encouragement as an Irishman, which he obtained as a Turk.

Miss EGAN had not lived with Mr. ACHMET twelve months before she was pregnant, and pretending one evening to be taken in labour, she dispatched her Mahometan for the Midwife, but in his absence she eloped to the country with an Officer. The good Mussulman swelled with indignation on his return, yet unwilling to lose his fair one, immediately set out in pursuit of her, and to make himself legal possessor, he married her on his return.

An Act of Parliament having passed for building a new Bridge in Dublin, the ground where Mr. ACHMET's Baths stood was found necessary for the purpose, and a fair price was voted for them. He erected another set equally elegant, in another part of the city, but his being an Irishman being now generally believed, the public were not so liberal

in

in encouraging him; his Baths were daily less and less frequented, until his pecuniary concerns became a little embarrassed, and he relinquished the whole scheme.

Mrs. ACHMET retained a respectable rank in the Dublin Theatre, and had performed at Shrewsbury, and other parts of England, when she was engaged at Covent-Garden, and opened that Theatre in the character of *Juliet*, in September, 1789. Her exertions in that part were at first rather feeble, but the beautiful delicacy of her person and countenance operated in her favour, and as she displayed great animation in the fourth Act, where she swallows poison, she was very warmly applauded. The piece was repeated several nights.

After that time she appeared in various parts, both in Tragedy and Comedy, with success. The Green Room says, that her attempting *Sir Harry Wildair* offended the Deputy-Manager, who considered it as his part. We cannot vouch for the truth of this assertion, but it carries probability with it, as after the period alluded to she was very much thrown into the shade, and at the conclusion

of

of the Season discharged. Her talents are, however, respectable, particularly in Sentimental Comedy, and might have been very useful in the Theatre. She is now in Ireland, where, it has been said, but we hope without foundation, that she is again playing her former character.

MR

Mr. FAWCET.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THERE is a certain degree of ridicule attached to the profession of a Player, that the mind seems incapable of resisting; and which the powers even of Garrick, Mrs. Jordan, or Mrs. Siddons, has not *altogether* removed. In darker ages they have been considered as the foes of Religion, and condemned by the anathemas of the Church. The liberality of the present has discouraged every prejudice of this sort, and even honoured some of its professors with marks of distinction, the more honourable as they are more rare.

Whether it was from too much sensibility of the degradation, or from an opinion, built upon experience, of the probable poverty attending an Actor, Mr. Fawcet was strongly

ly persuaded against the Stage, and every step was taken by his parents to prevent him from joining the Thespian train. This is the more remarkable as his father was a member of a London Theatre, and it was natural to expect he would agree that his son should follow his own footsteps; but he is not the only Player who has wished his progeny to be bred up in a more honourable profession than his own: Mrs. SIDDONS, Mr. F. AICKIN, Mr. C. BANNISTER, &c. may prove desires of a similar nature which had failed. Mr. FAWCET, senior, however, had more reason than them to disapprove of the profession, for his success and income on the Stage have been very inconsiderable, while the others in both have been extremely fortunate.

Before his *penchant* for the Drama could have acquired much strength, our hero was put apprentice to a linen draper, in London; and by the rigorous discipline of trade, and the great quantity of *thought* necessary to business, it was concluded that his attention would be totally estranged from the buskin, and confined to the counter. But this expectation

pectation proved ill founded, for instead of exerting himself in the shop, his mind was continually engaged in the Theatre, and negligence and contempt towards his employment produced so much sourness on the part of his Master, and stubborn indifference on the part of himself, that he resolved to quit so uneasy a situation. He eloped to an itinerant Company of Comedians; and he could not be much more pleased in giving scope to his inclinations, than his Master was, in being freed from such a torment.

He had seen but very few campaigns in the country, when the desertion of Mr. KNIGHT from the York Corps induced the Manager to engage Mr. FAWCET as his substitute. The list of parts which lay open to him, occasioned by the absence of his predecessor, and the encouragement given by the inhabitants of that city, called forth all his ability, and soon made him an established favourite. It was here that he was smitten with the charms of Mrs. MILLS, then recently become a widow; and he married her. His fame in low Comedy reached London; and in the wish of supplying, if possible, the loss

loss of the celebrated EDWIN, Mr. HARRIS engaged him for Covent-Gorden Theatre, where he made his *debut* at the commencement of the season 1791.

His success in the metropolis has by no means been sogreat as the success of him for whose loss he was designed to compensate; —but nevertheless it has been highly flattering, and fully equal to what he could reasonably have expected. He made choice of *Jacob* in *He would be a Soldier* for his first essay, and although that is a character in which EDWIN had not only been the original, but also a very great favourite, yet Mr. FAWCET performed it so much to the satisfaction of the town, that the play was repeated several nights. He afterwards appeared in other parts with equal *eclat*, and particularly in *Jerry Sneak*, which he coloured with a richness of humour, inferior to none of his predecessors.

Mr. FAWCET has evidently studied EDWIN's manner, and he comes nearer him in similarity and talent, than any other Actor. As he is very young it must be owing to his own negligence, or the want of encouragement

ment in the Manager, if he does not soon become the greatest favourite in EDWIN's line, to whom he seems calculated to be the best successor.

To the original bent of the mind, which is much, FAWCET added a classical education, to equip him for the profession—He studied at St. PAUL's school, and the early discipline he received there has given him a habit of application highly necessary to make a great Actor.

FAWCET excells in the country, but obstinate and ignorant, with a vulgar jocularity for companionable good humour. His spirits are excellent and unremitting---You must go on with him in the course he has entered to run.

MRS.

Mrs. FAWCET.

COVENT-GARDEN.

WE can only view this Lady as belonging to the London Theatre, on account of her husband, already mentioned in this work; for upon what other ground than a piece of lumber, inseparably attached to him, we can consider Mrs. Fawcet, who many years ago, when her powers were in more vigour, failed in her attempts in this metropolis? Such lumber often proves an insurmountable bar between Managers and Performers; yet in the present instance we do not think it so totally useless as not to be rendered worth its price, although the business it is applied to should only be such as may be transacted by almost any Lady in the Theatre.

If Mrs. Fawcet is now only a third or fourth-rate Actress in London, yet she gene-

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rally has been the Heroine of the Provincial Corps to which she has belonged, and those Corps have been, for Provincial ones, the most reputable. From this City, the place of her nativity, we first find her a conspicuous personage on the Edinburgh Stage, about twenty-two years ago, where, as Miss MORE, she was received with applause in the first tragic walk. But a *penchant* arising between her and Mr. MILLS, then the EDWIN of Scotland, they eloped together, and, like Mr. EDWIN, he left his wife and family behind him, who, however, soon consoled herself in the arms of a Mr. BLAND.

The Caledonians hold a breach of the marriage contract in such abhorrence, that, with all his popularity, Mr. MILLS was obliged to take refuge in England, where he and our present subject shone no inconsiderable luminaries in the Dramatic world. In 1783, by performing *Don Jerome* and *Skirmish*, for Mrs. WEBB's Benefit, he displayed so much merit, as induced the Managers of Covent-Garden to give him an engagement, and Miss MORE at the same time made her *entrée* as *Imogen*, at Drury-Lane, under the name of

Mrs. MILLS. She pleased, and was applauded, but it being evident that she could only render herself useful, and a Theatre being generally overstocked with persons of that description, she did not obtain a footing in Old Drury. Mr. MILLS soon afterwards disagreed with the Managers of Covent-Garden Theatre, and, with our Heroine, joined the York Company, where he, as a Comedian, and she as a Tragedian, were the most eminent of the Corps.

Mr. MILLS died in 1788, and Mr. FAWCET being soon afterwards engaged by Mr. WILKINSON, was so strongly smitten with the charms of his mourning widow, that as soon as ceremony would permit, they were made one by holy wedlock. Mr. FAWCET, when solicited tō article himself at Covent-Garden Theatre, stipulated for an engagement to his wife. Although she does not rank very forward upon the canvas, yet he possesses a degree of ability, which, in second or third-rate characters, may be found very useful in the Theatre.

Mr. INCLEDON,

COVENT-GARDEN,

POSSESSES the most powerful melodious pipe heard upon the stage in modern times; and although it is impossible to decide upon the extent of the natural abilities of singers in former ages, yet we cannot believe them to have been superior to those of this gentleman. As a tenor, his voice is not only always agreeable to the ear, but equal in compass to any piece of music; the *falsetto* part is extensive and sweet beyond conception; and the *bass* is better than could reasonably be expected in one gifted so liberally with the other two. He has profited by instructions from some of the best masters; and had the mode of his introduction to the London boards, and the scope given to his talents, been equal to

his merit, he at his *debut* in Covent-Garden Theatre would probably have attracted as great crowds as SIDDONS, JORDAN, or BILLINGTON.

Mr. INCLEDON is a native of some *Rotten Borough*, in Cornwall; where his father was a respectable physician. Whether from the inclination of our young Hero, or the numerous progeny of his Parent and consequent difficulty of providing for them, Master CHARLES was, when only eight years old, articled to Mr. JACKSON, (whose musical compositions are so justly celebrated) of Exeter. Young INCLEDON's voice at a very early period excited admiration, and under such an excellent Tutor, we need not wonder if the rapid progress he made in the science rendered him a little idol in all the Concerts and Musical parties about the neighbourhood. But having gone through a tolerable musical education, he at the end of six or seven years, felt the love of his country rise superior to every other consideration, and scorning APOLLO, when BRITANNIA was in danger, entered as a Midshipman on board the Formidable, A. D. 1779.

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He went to the West-Indies, and during the two years he continued in the Navy, was in several engagements, but whether during the whole of that period he was stationed in the Formidable we cannot say. His vocal powers were extremely agreeable to his Messmates, and their reputation soon recommended him to the particular notice of the most eminent Noblemen and Gentlemen in the Fleet, with whom he became a very great favourite. With a view of putting him into the proper sphere, where his powers would be most serviceable to himself, he was persuaded to return to England, and to attempt the stage. Lord MULGRAVE, Admiral PIGOT, and others, gave him letters to Mr. COLMAN, and he made application to our modern TERENCE, in the summer of 1782: but although his naval patrons had praised him to the skies, yet the Manager never complied with their request. Indeed that Gentleman, though so justly esteemed for his writings, has repeatedly confessed the deficiency of his ear in Music; and he never gave a stronger proof of it, than in the present

instance, where he rejected a treasure of the greatest importance.

Determined, however, to attempt a profession, to which he had been so often advised, and in which he had for some time thought himself capable of succeeding, he joined COLLINS's Company at Southampton, where the sound of his voice had sufficient interest to procure him a situation. He made his *entrée* as *Alphonso* in the *Castle of Andalusia*; and was received with the most flattering approbation. He had been about a year in this corps, and had experienced a large portion of the difficulties usually encountered by itinerant players, when the fame of his abilities having reached Bath, he was engaged by the managers in that city.

It was his musical powers alone that obtained him this engagement, for his abilities as an actor were not much valued; and the disappointments he had already met with, discouraged him from displaying with the necessary confidence the acquirements he had made in the science of Music, under JACKSON. He was regarded as little better than a Chorus Singer, and obliged to personate the most trifling

trifling or disagreeable characters; but fortunately the penetration of the musical *amateurs* in that city soon discovered his value. RAUZZINI, the conductor of the concerts, who as a teacher, a composer, or a man of exquisite taste, has few equals, one evening in a song between the acts perceived INCLEDON's great natural powers, and that he possessed a tolerable knowledge in Music; he immediately took him under his care, and gave him the best instructions a pupil could receive: he sang at the concerts in Bath and Bristol with great applause, was engaged at Vauxhall London in the summer, where his success was still more flattering, and RAUZZINI's patronage in a few months brought him from obscurity into universal estimation.

His presence was now courted by every company; he was the favourite at the Noblemen's Catch Club in Bath, which he assisted in establishing; and Doctor HARRINGTON, the most eminent Physician there, a gentleman of great musical genius, became his particular friend. By being under such a master as RAUZZINI six or seven years, he re-

ceived a complete musical education, and became, what he now is, the first English Singer on the Stage; yet it is extraordinary that during the whole of his stay in Bath, where he was almost worshipped by all ranks for his abilities, he never, even in his last season, was brought so forward on the Stage as might have been expected: perhaps this arose from the Manager's old system of preventing any Performer having too great a hold of the Public. Mr. WORDSWORTH, who made no great noise at Sadler's Wells when there, occupied the first walk in Bath: and Mr. INCLEDON, who has made very great noise in Covent-Garden Theatre during these four years, was obliged to content himself with the second. But he felt himself every day improving under RAUZZINI; and knowing that he must soon arrive to what he now is, he chearfully submitted to every mortification on the journey.

He made his *debut* as *Dermot* in *The Poor Soldier* on Covent-Garden Stage, in October 1790, and met with a very warm reception. But here it is necessary to remark, that having

ing been often heard at Vauxhall, a place which has become proverbial for vulgar songs and singers, the public opinion was made up upon the extent of his talents in a Theatre; and the very circumstance of his being a *Vauxhall Singer*, was sufficient with the multitude, who have no judgment of their own, to make great success for him in the Drama a ridiculous expectation. But the voice which, in common with all others, was never listened to in Vauxhall Gardens, by persons of musical taste, had a very unexpected effect when confined within a Theatre; and it was now for the first time discovered by the town, that INCLEDON united with one of the finest voices great science, pathos, taste and execution. But whether from delicacy to JOHNSTONE, or a wish to prevent INCLEDON gaining too much on thepublic favour, the Managers gave him no first-rate characters; they did not bring him so forward as his talents deserved, and for the fame he has acquired he is wholly indebted to the irresistible force of his own merit, which must make its way to reputation if at all heard. He had occasionally performed *Captain Macheath*,

Young Meadows, &c. in so masterly a manner as prove him to be fully, and almost singularly, calculated to take the lead in all Operas.

He assists with great *eclat* at the *Oratorios* in Lent; and for two Summers he has performed in Ireland, where no Singer, not even Mrs. BILLINGTON, was ever more caressed. The extreme encouragement given to him in that kingdom, might justify him in adopting it as his principal scene of action.

We cannot help observing that Mr. INCLEDON has considerably changed his stile of singing since he has been engaged in Covent-Garden Theatre. The *falsetto* part of his voice, if not altogether laid aside by him, is much less used than when he was on the Bath Stage, where its charms generally gave the highest delight. In the song of "*Bett sweet Blossom*," he particularly charmed with it; and he has sometimes been obliged to sing that air three times in an evening—never less than twice. He seems to be now instructed to practise more in the tenor or middle part of his voice, which may perhaps be more agreeable to nice scientific ears, but far less to the multitude; for, in Music, like in painting

ing, a colouring of light and shade surprises and pleases by its boldnes and variety.

There can be doubt that he is very considerably improved of late. Although he never deigns to pay the slighest attention to the dialogue, yet he is so true a singer, and so general a favourite, that he may always command the very conspicuous station he now fills.

Sometimes, though seldom, he avails himself of his powers to excite a false taste for the difficulties of execution in the place of feeling and intonation.

Miss. DALL.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THIS young Lady is daughter of the late Mr. DALL, Royal Academician, and many years principal Scene-painter at Covent-Garden. She made her first public appearance in the *Oratorios* performed two years ago at the above Theatre, under the direction of Messrs. HARRISON and ASHLEY, and met with that liberal reception which modest merit is ever certain of experiencing. In the Books of the Performance of the fifth Grand Musical Festival in Westminster-Abbey, soon after the Lent Season, her name appears as the fourth principal *Soprano*. The September following we find her distinguishing herself

herself with STORACE, at the Colchester Musical Festival. From this period it seems that Miss DALL had not any particular engagement till the spring of the following year, when she appeared in the Comic Opera of the *Woodman*. Her introduction on the Stage is said to have arisen from the following circumstance.——At that period the Theatre could not boast of a leading Vocal Heroine; to supply the deficiency, and complete the *Dramatis Personæ* of the above favourite piece. Mrs. PIELTAN was engaged at a very handsome stipend; it was soon, however, found that on the evenings of performance Mrs. P——— had literally too much *spirits*;—— an able successor in the character was therefore deemed absolutely necessary, that the *run* of the Opera might not be impeded.—— Miss DALL was fixed upon, and if we may rely on the newspapers of the day, she came forwards with only one rehearsal, and that on the day of her appearance, and at once restored the character to the elegant simplicity designed by the Author, and gave an additional effect to the Glees, &c. by the sweetness

ness of her voice.—This part she performed twenty-three nights. The same season she played *Rosetta*, in *Love in a Village*, for INCLEDON's Benefit, and *Eliza*, in *The Flitch of Bacon*, for that of Miss BRUNTON, now Mrs. MERRY. The following season Mrs. BILLINGTON returned from Dublin, and resumed her situation —At this period we find Miss DALL engaged at the York Subscription Concerts, in which city it seems she continued till the beginning of May; for in the advertisement prefixed to the Songs of the New Comic Opera of *Just in Time*, performed for the Benefit of MUNDEN, the Author, after stating the grounds on which his Piece was finished, adds:

" In this state it remained, when the idea suggested to the Writer, that its performance might render his Friend, Mr. MUNDEN, some trifling assistance, and upon that ground his first *Dramatic Bantling* is submitted to the Public, this evening, in its present form: but even of this satisfaction he was nearly disappointed, by Mrs. BILLINGTON's numerous engagements preventing her from studying

dying a new character; and should have been so, had not Miss DALL been applied to, whose letter from York in answer stated, "That, although she was a mere novice to "the Stage, yet, if it was thought that her "humble abilities could in the least supply "the deficiency in the Cast, she was extremely "ready, declining all emoluments, to render "her assistance, especially as the Opera was "intended for the benefit of so respectable "a Character, and a soeserving a favourite "of the Public, as Mr. MUNDEN."

In this Opera she accordingly appeared and rendered the Author essential service by the exertion of her talents.——The flattering success of the Piece induced the Manager to accept it for that season.

Miss DALL, it seems, was a Pupil of Mr. MAZZINGHI. Her voice, although not the most powerful, possesses much sweetness, and she runs the most difficult passages with singular ease, neatness, and rapidity; her shake, which is a natural one, is remarkably fine. In person, she is rather under the middle stature, but perfectly well formed; and her manners are genteel and interesting.——

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In private life, her conduct is unblemished; and she will, unquestionably, when more *mellow* in her profession, prove an ornament to the Theatre, and a deserving favourite of the Public.

Mr.

Mr. FENNEL.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THIS Gentleman is among the few who have descended from genteel prospects to the Stage, purely from inclination. Without the stimulus of necessity, and in danger of offending very respectable relations, he was impelled, as it were by instinct, to attempt the Buskin, and made application to the Managers without the forms of introduction, or the impediment of fear.

Mr. FENNEL can boast of more respectable connexions than the generality of the children of THESPIS. He was born, if we mistake not, in Wales, where his relations now are, who gave him a liberal education, and intended him for the Bar. He came to London for accomplishment in the Law, but his attention was diverted from that pursuit, by a pre-

a predilection for the Drama. Anxious to try how far Nature had qualified him for a profession for which he felt such fondness, and at the same time anxious to conceal his passion from his friends, he thought in so remote a place as Edinburgh, his attempt, if unsuccessful, would be buried in oblivion.

Thither he went in the Summer of 1787, and taking a lodging near the Theatre, he soon betrayed his errand to some of the Corps who inhabited the same house, by spouting in his apartment; but he communed with none of them. Mr. JACKSON the Manager, was personally applied to, and our Hero performed *Jaffier*, *Othello*, &c. under the assumed name of CAMBRAY.

The flattering reception he met with here, induced him to hope for general approbation in London. He waited on Mr. HARRIS, about the opening of Covent-Garden Theatre, 1787, without any introduction, and coming to the point at once, told him he wished to become an Actor. Mr. HARRIS replied, that there were many possessed with the same desire, but few with the necessary qualifications. Upon which Mr. FENNEL begged

ged leave to put it in his power to judge, and immediately repeated two or three speeches so much to the satisfaction of his auditor, that a night was instantly settled for him to make his *debut*.

Either from a desire of concealing his countenance, or a partiality for the part, he selected *Othello* for his *entrée*, and the encouragement given to his first efforts, emboldened him to drop the sable mask, and come forward as *Jaffier*, *Alexander the Great*, &c. but still under the fictitious name of CAMBRAY. In all these characters he was kindly received, and looked on as a very promising Theatrical candidate. But as his talents did not create the admiration he wished and expected, he thought it adviseable to practise in the country, until his powers were nearer maturity.

The favour with which his exertions had been honoured in Edinburgh, pointed out that City as the most genial school for his instruction; but he had scarcely renewed his former estimation before he was driven from that Stage, in the most arbitrary, unjust, and ungenerous manner.

The

The Play of *Venice Preserved* was to be performed, and Mr. Woods, who has been the Scotch *Roscius* for about twenty years, already chagrined at the reputation of Mr. Fennel, was mortified and alarmed when the part of *Jaffier* was taken from him, and given to the latter, though this was done without any design of hurting him, but merely to cast the play as strongly as possible; and *Pierre*, a character of equal, if not superior consequence, was given him in exchange.—This was entirely the act of the Manager, for we believe Fennel approved of the soldier as much as the lover.

Mr. Woods, who was originally a Printer, felt himself piqued and insulted by the change. As he professed to teach the Scotch how to speak English, and conducted himself with great propriety in private life, he was admitted into genteel circles, and commanded such influence, that no Manager dared play in Edinburgh without engaging him on his own terms. Elevated in his own ideas, he imagined an explanation with Jacksgn would be derogating from his importance. He waited on several young Lawyers who had formerly

formerly been his pupils, represented his grievance in the strongest colours, and with the advantage of having auditors previously prepossessed in his favour. The audience in Edinburgh think themselves the most select and judicious in the world! The audience in London they call an undiscriminating mob. Such being their sentiments, they instantly caught fire at the idea of an *English Creeld* superseding their *ain clever Callant*; and after calling a numerous meeting, they went to the Theatre in a body, resolved to vent their indignation on Mr. FENNEL.

Whenever he appeared, he was saluted with hissing; called on to answer how he dared take *Jaffier* from Mr. WOODS; insulted, and loaded with the most approbrious invectives. He endeavoured to explain, but on hearing a zealot stigmatise him in the most odious language, his feelings as a man were so put to the quick, that he replied, "The person who says so is a villain!" This assertion not being generally understood, gave general offence, and he was called on to make a submission more humiliating, if possible, than that formerly demanded of Mr. JAMES AICKIN; which

which he refused, and in consequence was forced to quit the Stage.

Though the arbitrary and illiberal body of Lawyers became his bitter enemies, yet the unprejudiced inhabitants of Edinburgh thought him shamefully injured. The story spread, not only through Scotland, but England and Ireland; it was universally talked of, and the irrascible Caledonians were universally execrated. Every one felt for Mr. FENNEL, and wished to see his wrongs redressed.

Finding so many friends, and finding justice so much on his side, he brought an action against the ringleaders for depriving him of his livelihood; but here he found himself in an awkward predicament. To the disgrace of the country, not one Advocate could be found to plead his cause, though it was well known to be a good one, until Mr. CHARLES HOPE and Mr. LEWIS GRANT stood forth his champions, rather than not rescue Scotland from the ignominy of being destitute of Advocates, to plead the cause of an oppressed individual.

But as *Sir Harry Wildair* says, "It is vain to

to contend with a man in his own profession;" for, after prosecuting the conspirators with all possible rigour near twelve months, he found himself as distant from redress as when he first began; and as if it were to exonerate the friends to his cause from mortification at his ill success, he consented to apologize on the public Stage, and acknowledge himself in the wrong, though every one present knew he had not done wrong till that moment!

This action, which changed the public commiseration into contempt, we cannot account for: it was not from a view of emolument in Edinburgh, as he soon after left that City; and it could not be from a conviction of his error. He performed a few nights in York, and obtained another engagement at Covent-Garden in 1789, where he seldom performed, and was discharged at the end of the Season.

On the commencement of the following Season he thought to effect by his pen what he could not accomplish by his Dramatic talents; and to frighten the Managers into a compliance with his wishes, by scourging them

them in a periodical publication, entitled "The Theatrical Guardian!" He professed to redress all Theatrical grievances, and he spoke many strong and bitter truths; but he failed in his design; the publication was dropped; the Managers remain unreformed, and Mr. FENNEL disengaged from any of the London Theatres.

In his person he is very tall, and rather handsomely formed; his face, too, is well adapted for the Drama, and his voice is powerful and melodious. His merit arises more from personal than mental endowments, for his eloquence, though lofty and sonorous, is neither varied nor judicious; and his deportment is rather incumbered by the stateliness of his person, than rendered graceful by it.

MRS. LEWIS.

COVENT-GARDEN.

LIKE in other pursuits of life, connections formed on the Stage sometimes enable those to become independent, who, if they had been left to the reward of their own abilities, must have pined in want. The merchant or the tradesman frequently has riches heaped upon him, although his capacity is not worth a shilling, only because his uncle or his cousin happen to be wealthy and knowing; and we find Mrs. LEWIS, whose greatest Theatrical recommendations never could have entitled her to thirty shillings per week, seated in the midst of power and plenty, to which she has been raised by what is commonly called being *ruined*.

Had Mr. LEESON, the father of this lady,

been a strict moralist, it is probable she would not now have graced these pages. But an inattention to his business of a Printer, which he followed in St. John's-Square, and an inattention to his family, favoured the early *penchant* of his daughter for the Drama: which with another father might have been curbed as tending to divert a young mind from sobriety and industry to folly and idleness. Miss LEESON's passion to see plays, was followed by a passion to act them; and having acquired some knowledge of reciting, by her observation of the Performers, her friends conceived such favourable hopes of her success, that they procured her an introduction to Mr. MACKLIN, in order that she might be trained for public exhibition.

That hardy veteran, and celebrated Theatrical tutor, wanted no other recommendation to his favour than Miss LEESON's looks; she was very pretty, and Mr. MACKLIN always felt himself happy in instructing the fair sex. After she had been under his care a short time, he took her to Dublin, for the purpose of introducing her in that soil, where so many Stage plants of eminence have sprung

up

up and flourished. But Miss LEESON's success was not such as to add honour to the place of her Theatrical birth, yet her youth and beauty secured her protection and encouragement with the auditors in that gallant nation.

She had not long been on the Irish boards, before she made an impression on Mr. WILLIAM LEWIS, at that time performing with great success in Capel-Street. He attacked her heart with considerable ardour, and adorned with Theatrical laurels as he was, he soon made a conquest. But our young lovers were too warm and sincere to wait the cold forms of matrimony, a stipulation for which, they thought, would imply a doubt of each other's constancy and truth. They lived together many years, and when they had produced several fine children, and had fully proved and approved each other's temper, they married.

It would be ungenerous to analyse Mrs. LEWIS's Dramatic abilities; they cannot be commended, although her motives for continuing on the Stage must. Her family is large, and no doubt she wishes to contribute all in her power towards their happiness: nor

does she thrust herself forward in characters which she is incapable of sustaining. From an apparent knowledge of the extent of her powers, she never assumes parts of more importance than such as *Lady Piercy* in *Henry IV.* where it is impossible any genteel well-dressed woman can offend. The rarity of her appearance on the Boards leads us to conclude that she would never come before the Public, were it not from a desire of occasionally drawing upon the Treasurer; and although we cannot applaud the Actress, yet we must admire the woman.

MR.

Mr. EVATT.

COVENT-GARDEN.

HAD this Gentleman continued in the business to which he was originally bred, and pursued it with the same ardour as he has done the Stage, with his habits of life he at this time would, in all probability, have been a thriving if not a rich Shopkeeper:—but he seems to live in hopes of one day being a PALMER or a KEMBLE; and although we would rejoice in his arrival at such eminence, for his assiduity and modesty deserve reward, yet we are sorry to think that his coldness, and apparent bashfulness, together with a certain awkwardness of person and deportment, are likely to preclude him long, if not for ever, from making a conspicuous figure on the boards.

Mr. EVATT was a Shopman, if not an Apprentice, to Mr. DYDE, the Haberdasher

in Pall-Mall. His first essays on the Stage were made in some wretched itinerant Companies in the vicinity of London, through the distresses and vicissitudes of which he is not of sufficient importance to be followed. We now find him engaged at Covent-Garden and the Summer Theatres, where he certainly renders himself useful, though in very trifling characters. He has, however, this recommendation, that he is generally perfect in the words of his parts, and he pays particular attention to his duty—qualities as requisite on the Stage as behind the counter, and of which the Managers are no doubt sensible.

Mr.

Mr. DUFFEY.

COVENT-GARDEN.

A Fondness for Theatrical exhibitions begets a propensity towards the Performers, and a desire of their company among the middling ranks of mankind; which in a little time grows into a wish of attempting their profession, from a hope of a genteel income, and a profusion of public panegyric.

Mr. Duffey, who served a regular probation to the business of a Hatter, and who kept a shop in Dublin, was highly pleased with the society of the histrionic Gentlemen in that city; and as he sung a good song, and heard his voice often complimented, he soon looked down with contempt on his mechanical maintenance, and felt his breast burn only for the soothing service of Apollo.

The report of his natural talents opened the way for his introduction to the Theatre; and his reception by the Public was such as

he had great reason to be pleased with. His voice was highly commended; but study and private practice were evidently very necessary to make him a correct Singer.

While in Dublin, this Gentleman made one of the best blunders recorded.——One evening, during the performance of the *Jubilee*, he was suddenly called to go on the Stage; but having mislaid a wooden goblet made for the purpose, he, in the hurry, rather than keep the Stage waiting, snatched up a crystal rummer, and sung, amid the loudest bursts of laughter "Behold this fair Goblet! 'twas "carved from a *tree*," &c.

A difference arising between Mr. HARRIS and Mrs. KENNEDY, a Lady that generally officiated as a male in the vocal line, Mr. DUFFY, who had now seen some service in Dublin, was engaged in her stead for Covent-Garden, where he made his *debut* the beginning of the Season 1789. He has a good voice, but having a great deal to learn, he was discharged at the conclusion, to make room for INCLEDON.

He has since sung at Vauxhall, and now, we believe, follows the business of a Coal Merchant.

MR.

Mr. FARLEY,

COVENT-GARDEN,

HAS been educated from his infancy in Covent Garden Theatre. His parents lived in Bow-Street, and were glad to permit him, while a child, to go upon the Stage, as it produced some little addition to their income. It is not more than eight or ten years ago, since he performed the *Page* in the Tragedy of the *Orphan*, and at that time he did not appear to be more than eight or nine years old. He afterwards acted *behind* the curtain as *Call-Boy*. The trifling characters allotted to him being chiefly *Servants* or *Fops*, afford no opportunity of exhibiting what he possesses. He is however so very young that it would not be surprizing if he one day attains a much higher rank in the Theatre.

We are warranted in this assertion, although

but a slender instance, by the very discriminative feelings with which he pourtrayed the character of *Oscar*, during BYRN's illness, and so greatly superiorto the diminutive original.

MR.

MRS. WELLS.

COVENT-GARDEN.

WITH that sweetness of simplicity which characterises the rural innocence of unpolished nature——at once the admiration of refined breeding, whose decorous accomplishments lose their refulgence, when with the charms of the cottage maid contrasted——with the uncommon endowments of personal and mental captivations, whose bewitching powers endear most, when engaged in the delineation of artless rusticity, we bring forward Mrs. WELLS, with all that fame that her predominating merits have long commanded.

In the town of Birmingham she was born. Her father was engaged in the manufactures of that place, and her mother, Mrs. DAVIES, kept a Tavern, whose good chear, as any

good thing will do, attracted the favour and company of the Theatrical Gentlemen; among whom was Mr. HULL. That Gentleman, as if Nature whispered to him the future greatness of Mrs. WELLS, was proud to stand her god-father at the christening.

Such was the worldly introduction of Miss DAVIES, now Mrs. WELLS. Early in her life the chilling hand of misfortune lay on her infant head; but it lay lightly. The pangs that may rend the breast of an adult, affect not the breast of a babe.

Her father became insane, and died in a mad house. Her mother, whose monied affairs were embarrassed by the expence attending her husband's indisposition, found the business of a Vintner clog on her fingers; and as she had caught a fondness for acting, by her intimacy with persons of that profession, she embarked her all upon the Stage, and, with two daughters on her hands, she obtained an engagement in Dublin.

The powerful aid of extraordinary talents was somewhat wanting to secure her the continual countenance of the Irish nation. She returned to England; and in Yorkshire, and

different

different parts of the North, were her best abilities displayed. About this time it was that our young *Cowslip* first walked into public notice, and puerile as her exertions were, her sweet delicacy of visage, and elegant meekness of deportment, drew that which is the aim of all——general commendation.

The wandering steps of our young Heroine led her, with her tender mother, to Shrewsbury. Her ripening beauties, like the mid day Sun, at this time infused a warmth into every breast that came near her. Mr. WELLS, a Comedian in the same Theatre, felt forcibly the truth of this assertion, and his utmost efforts were exerted to obtain her. So young a heart was easily prevailed on. The Manager, Mr. MILLER, assisted at the nuptials, and poor *Cowslip* was wedded without knowing for what reason.

An union, in which affection, on the side of our fair one had no share, and which was brought about by too sudden, and too transitory a passion on the side of Mr. WELLS, could not be expected to exist long. At Exeter the bridegroom became attached to a Lady who had formerly kept a Chandler's shop

shop in Holborn, but who had now commenced Actress, and they both ran off to Ireland, where he has remained ever since.

For the present object of our story this was an event the most fortunate in her life. Unincumbered by a Husband of no abilities, her own brilliancy of powers commanded more notice, and consequently mare fame. Mr. CALLEUR, impressed with the highest esteem for her talents, obtained for her an engagement at the Hay-Market, and she made her first appearance on a London Stage about the year 1781.

So much beauty and dramatic merit could not be suffered to depart the metropolis when once it had been seen in it. She was engaged for the Winter at Drury-Lane; and we may add, what in adding is but justice, that she stepped the more into good opinion the more she was seen; nor should her spruceness in the male habit be overlooked.

Her success, however, was not confined to Comedy alone. The powers of the immortal SIDDONS having rendered Tragedy fashionable, Mrs. WELLS, whose general talents are happy in depicting universal Drama, paid her

her orisons to the melancholy MELPOMENE; she played *Isabella* at one time for her benefit, and *Jane Shore* at another. The surprise excited at her attempt is not to be wondered at, when it is known that she was looked upon in the train of THALIA as a principal, and that the grief-rending scene she never yet had entered on.

The prejudice against her capability vanished as she appeared. The scenes of SOUTHERN and ROWE she pourtrayed with that natural animation and pleasing effect, which are only to be effected by sublimity of genius and sublimity of beauty. The Majesty of SIDDONS was majesty indeed:—but the soft pathos and discriminating delivery of Mrs. WELLS were delightful to every discriminating auditor; and her shriek in *Isabella* moved many tender hearts to shriek with her in unison.

Thus did her own merit do what merit always will do.—Her name as a Tragedian became honourable, as her name as a Comedian had been before.——The Public Advertiser, and the Morning Chronicle, two Papers at that time in high request for their Theatrical Obser-

vations, grew still into more request by the sweet and elegant delineations of her fascinating performances: the language of them was new; and novelty, added to whim and peculiarity of expression, rendered them valuable as the Poems of *Della Crusca*, which will live with all Poems that deserve to live.

The fame built upon her Tragical exertions, Mrs WELLS hoped would influence the Drury-Lane Managers to put her forward in that line; but she was somewhat mistaken; for, blind to their own interest, they were blind to her excellence; and with that commendable spirit that distinguishes conscious capacity, she went over to the Covent-Garden Manager, where she flourished in *Hermione*, *Imogen*, &c. but the cup and dagger not predominating at that House, Mrs. WELLS threw them aside.

The buzz of private conversation had long extolled her powers of mimicry; and her public exhibition of those powers had long been solicited in vain. In the summer of 1787, soon after the opening of the Royalty-Theatre, she was, by the entreaties of her friends, and the offer of fifty pounds per night,

night, induced to come forward with her imitations at that Theatre; and, in saying that the crowds were immense who went to see her; that the applause was general and incessant; and that her likenesses, particularly those of Mrs. SIDDONS and Mrs. CRAWFORD, were executed with the most rare facility and truth —we only say what thousands, now in different parts of the globe, said at the time of her performance.

The fractious caprice of old age drove her several seasons from the Hay-Market Theatre, where her *Cowslip*, her *Madge*, and her *Maude*, were resorted to with that great degree of avidity which distinguishes the early part of Mrs. SIDDONS's career.—She, in the Season 1791, with her return, restored fashion to that House; but now she has again deserted it. Her Imitations she gives at her Benefits, where those who frequently know what it is to receive great Dramatic gratification, are sure to attend. The *Dramatist*, and other Pieces which she has patronized, best can speak the truth of this.

For several Summers she has given the Provincial Towns a taste of her exquisite Theatrical

trical niceties. Cheltenham, Weymouth, and Brighton, have been delighted with her wide spread power of pleasing; and the general admiration of the Nobility and Gentry has been eclipsed by the particular patronage and attention of Their Majesties.

Of those virtues that exalt the human race, Mrs. WELLS is by no means destitute:—her care of an aged mother can never be too much known; her benevolence to the unfortunate Mrs. EDWIN can never be enough praised; and her generosity to all objects of charity is well known to those who are proud of knowing her. But as this Lady has announced her own Memoirs, written by herself, we shall leave to her the completion of the picture. Fortune is not always propitious to the benevolent. Mrs. WELLS has, in recent vicissitudes, to deplore the contrary.

In the Theatrical hemisphere her abilities have long been admired; and with that admiration must cease all true taste. Simplicity characterises her superior acting; nor is Comedy or Tragedy lost in her hands. With due distinction, she may be called a Child of Nature; and with justice most rigid, she

she may be called a divine Performer. She is handsome and elegant in her person; her face is completely beautiful; and her leering smile is, with sensations the most pleasant, perfectly captivating,

MR.

Mr. POPE.

COVENT-GARDEN.

By depicting heroes and heroines on the canvas, this gentleman seems to have caught the desire of depicting them in a more animated manner on the stage; and though his merit in the former was praise-worthy, yet his merit in the latter has brought him into still more notice and emolument.

He is a native of Cork, in Ireland, where he early studied drawing, and had arrived at such proficiency in the art of painting, that some of his pieces are highly spoken of. He very early imbibed a fondness for the Drama, and performed *Oroonoko*, and several other parts in Cork, merely to try his skill. Miss Younge, being there at that time, was so delighted with his talents, that she recommended

mended him to Mr. HARRIS, and exerted all her influence in his favour.

His first appearance at Covent-Garden was in his darling part of *Oonoko*, about the conclusion of the year 1784; and he personated the unfortunate Prince with such feeling and animation, that aided by his powerful melodious voice he astonished all present, and gave the greatest reason to expect that he would soon shine the first Tragic Actor on the Stage. The play was repeated many nights, and crowds went to see it.

But when he divested himself of his sable visage, the critics discovered that his countenance was not formed for Tragedy. His round face was found incapable of expressing grief, joy, or disdain; nevertheless, his handsome figure, powerful sweet voice, the natural fire which breathed in every word; and above all, the tender yet warm manner in which he pourtrayed the *Lover*, rendered him a great favourite, particularly with the fair sex, who universally allowed that no man upon the Stage knew how to take a Lady delicately by the hand but himself.

As Mrs. SIDDONS had at this time brought Tragedies into great fashion, Mr. HARRIS, with HENDERSON, POPE, HOLMAN, Mrs. CRAWFORD, and Miss YOUNGE, was able to represent them with great *eclat*; and the public was equally divided in opinion about the excellence of the two last mentioned Gentlemen.

Whether from gratitude or love, Mr. POPE soon after married Miss YOUNGE; and as Mr. HOLMAN disagreed with the Manager, and left the Theatre, Mr. POPE got possession of most of his parts, such as *Romeo*, *Hamlet*, &c. and Mr. HENDERSON being dead, he was for a few Seasons the principal Tragedian at the Theatre.

But Mr. HARRIS, who knows that novelty is the delight of a London audience, re-engaged HOLMAN in 1790, and as a jarring about parts was apprehended, Mr. POPE thought proper to go to Edinburgh, where he was a very great favourite.

Since the loss of Mr. HENDERSON, no Actor has appeared, who plays so much from the heart as Mr. POPE. Had nature been as kind to his countenance, which is, however, rather

rather handsome off the Stage, as she has been to his person and voice, with a very little more attention to the Graces, he would have become an excellent Actor: ——— he would be what we may suppose of KEMBLE with POPE's voice and animation.

During an absence of two or three years from the London Stage, he paid considerable attention to his first study, the art of Painting, and it was even reported, that he never more would wield the truncheon. But his occasional performances in country Theatres sufficiently contradicted that assertion. He is re-engaged at Covent-Garden Theatre, and made his first appearance there in 1791 as *Lord Townley*, a character which he supports with great manliness and energy; he has also performed *Oroonoko*, and other favourite parts, nor has he fallen off in point of ability, or in the public favour,

MRS. CROUCH.

DRURY-LANE.

WE now introduce a Lady, who is universally allowed to be the most beautiful that ever graced the English Stage. The symmetry of her countenance and person, the soft fascination of her smile, and the unaffected sweetness of her manner, excite the admiration even of females. But when those personal accomplishments have the addition of a melodious refined pipe, with great talents as an Actress to recommend them, they become irresistible ;—hence the sudden bursts of applause that so often follow the exertions of Mrs. CROUCH.

This Lady is a daughter of Mr. PHILLIPS, an Attorney, who is descended from a respectable family in South Wales. Mr. PHILLIPS has distinguished himself by various literary productions, particularly during the contest

test between Great Britain and her American Colonies. By these he acquired the acquaintance and friendship of the great Dr. FRANKLIN, which continued to his death. Some of Mr. PHILLIPS's productions were esteemed so favourable to the cause of Liberty, that the Doctor requested they might be read at the head of battalions of the American troops, to inspire them with the sentiments which they breathed.

Previous to Miss PHILLIPS's entrance on the Stage, she was on the eve of marriage to a Gentleman who had acquired a large fortune in India, and who intended to embark for that country a second time; but her friends insisting that she should have two European attendants to accompany her thither, and the Nabob, who had passed the meridian of life, insisting on the contrary, the proposed match, in which Miss PHILLIPS's heart was little interested, was declined on her part. The Gentleman was afterwards killed in an engagement with HYDER ALLY.

During the treaty of marriage, she was strongly solicited by the Managers to engage at Drury-Lane, as they were particularly in

want of a first Singer; and as she united to one of the finest voices in the world extreme beauty of face and figure, they predicted greatly in her favour. Liberal terms were offered, but from the report of her approaching marriage having reached the Managers, they concluded she had declined, and immediately articled Mrs. CARGILL.

About two years afterwards she was accidentally met by Mr. LINLEY, who expressed much astonishment at her not being in India. He instantly repeated his proposals, though Mrs. CARGILL was then engaged, and after some months treaty, she was articled to him by her father, when it was stipulated that Mr. LINLEY should receive half of her salary for some years. She made her *entrée* in the difficult character of *Mandane*, in *Artaxerxes*, in 1781, although she had only sixteen days to study the Songs and Recitative.

The success and applause that attended her first appearance, and her few performances in the first year, soon convinced the Managers how fortunate they were in securing such a treasure. Aided by great application, her own

own natural advantages, the abilities of Mr. LINLEY, and the exertions of her FATHER, who is reckoned a complete master in the English language, her progress was rapid; and professional reputation, in any line, is almost synonimous with opulence.

A marriage was certainly on foot between her and a Mr. LOFTUS, of a noble family in Ireland, which was broke off, through the jealousy of some of those noble relations, who interfered to prevent it: and though strongly importuned to bring an action for the breach of promise of marriage, which the lady could have well supported, her feelings took the alarm; and highly, we think, to her honour, Miss PHILLIPS discovered a spirit and delicacy superior to such a conduct, very properly considering herself an equal in every thing but fortune, in a case where fortune ought not in justice to be considered as any thing.

Mr. CROUCH, a young Gentleman of the Navy, and of a respectable family in Cornwall, next made overtures to her; and though Miss PHILLIPS was at that time surrounded with many suitors, he had the good fortune to be preferred. A private marriage imme-

diately took place. Notwithstanding the malicious and envious insinuations which have appeared through the medium of Newspapers, and which, we are sorry to say, are too often directed against some of the worthiest members of society, this gentleman possesses the most perfect esteem and friendship of a very numerous acquaintance, some of whom are of the very first description, and more particularly so with those he became acquainted with through his union with Miss PHILLIPS.

Mrs. CROUCH had not obtained the summit of vocal reputation, when Mr. KELLY arrived from the Continent, who being an entire stranger in England, experienced her most friendly attentions; in return, she received instructions, which the musical science of that Gentleman enabled him to give, and which were soon perceived in the improvement of our heroine.

Our fair Syren has been equally admired in Ireland as in this kingdom; she has been three or four seasons among that hospitable people, and particularly the Summer 1789, when she went through the circuit with more distinguished

distinguished *eclat* than in any preceding excursion. She so charmed the people of Limeric, that on her Benefit Night she was presented with a large Gold Medal by the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Town; with a tribute inscribed to her great abilities on one side, and on the other, the Arms of the City most beautifully engraven.

When in Dublin, the bewitching manner in which she sung the celebrated Ballad of *Auld Robin Grey* gained so great applause, that it alone filled Smock Alley Theatre.

Elegant compliments have been paid her in other parts of Ireland, as well as in London and our Porvincial Theatres. She lately received overtures from different parts of the Continent, but we hope she will repay the partiality of her friends in this Metropolis, by continuing to indulge them with her enchanting powers.

In the season of 1787-8 Mr. KELLY introduced in *Comus* a new duet, which was sung with such delightful effect by him and Mrs. CROUCH, as gained them the most unbounded plaudits. It gave rise to much criticism, and many poetical effusions. Among the

latter, one by a JOHN OSWALD under the assumed name of SILVESTER OTWAY, which, for its singularity, as well as that of its Author,* we shall take the liberty of inserting here. It is entitled *Euphrosyné*. The allusions in it are chiefly made to Mrs. CROUCH as first *Bacchante*, presenting the enchanted cup; and Mr. KELLY as First *Bacchanal*.

"To pamper'd Wealth or Pride enthron'd
No venal praise I pay!

No

JOHN OSWALD was a native of Edinburgh. At an early age he eloped from his parents, and enlisted as a private soldier in the 36th regiment. As soon as it was discovered by his Relations, an Ensigncy was purchased for him in the 42d Regiment.

In that capacity he went to the East-Indies, during the war before last, and there distinguished himself with great gallantry; but owing to a difference of opinion with General MACLEOD, then his Commander in Chief, he sold out, and after a peregrination of about two years among the Brachmans of India, the Persians, &c. he arrived in England, so changed by the manners and dress he assumed, as to be unknown to his friends.

He became a convert so much to the Hindoo faith, that the ferocity of the young soldier of fortune sunk into

No gain-insidious thought pollutes th' impassion'd
lay;
For in my candid breast
Nor proud Ambition's anxious train
Their giddy projects roll,
Nor gilded Pomp of semblance vain
A single sigh excites,
Or wakes to care my simple soul,

---

into the mild philosophic manners of the Hindoo Brachman. During his stay in England he uniformly abstained from eating animal food: nay, so great was his abhorrence of *blood*, that rather than pass through a *Butcher's* Market, he would go any distance round about. He brought up his children in the same way.

We shall pass over the intermediate part of his life with brevity, in order to arrive at the most important period, the catastrophe.

In 1790, being a warm admirer of the French Revolution, he went to Paris, and there associated with the leaders of the Jacobin Club. He was, however, a long time there without being distinguished by any thing but his violent speeches. He lived in a small hut, a short distance from Paris, and during his obscurity he was driven to such distress, that it is said, being truly reduced to *Sans-Culottes* in their clothing, he turned out both his sons to feed on what they could pick up in the neighbouring gardens and forests, for they possessed

Of Fortune reckless, while the Fates benign
Permit to prove the warm Delights
That wanton round the rosy throne of Love:
Love, whose soul-subduing sway,
Submissive all that breathe obey,
Men and immortal Gods above.
" And thou, to whom his delegated reign,
Fair Syren of the scenic field,

The

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possessed an equal antipathy with the Father to animal food.

Soon after this, Fortune smiled on him. He proposed to the Convention to introduce the use of the Pike not only in the Army, but among the Mob. This proposal being accepted, he had under tuition an immense concourse of both sexes, to instruct in the use of that instrument. He was appointed Colonel Commandant; and thus he was suddenly advanced from the greatest poverty to a state of affluence. He is also said to have suggested that capering, singing, and fury exhibited by the French armywhen going to action, which has so much tended to confound and intimidate their opponents.

Here is to be remarked the contrariety of the human character. He whose mildness of disposition could not behold a drop of blood without shuddering with horror—he who could call a Soldier by no milder epithet than that of *Butcher!*—even he instantaneously fled from the one extreme to the other. He is said to have commanded at those unspeakably horrid massacres at

Paris

The God commits on earth to wield,
O! deign, with one enchanting smile,
To chear th' aspiring Lay,
Which trembling tries the proud essay!——
For oh! amid the meteor blaze
Of fancy flashing on the soul,
With eagle pinion'd flight,
What Son of Song sublime,
To Poesy's giddy summit soars,
And cropping, bold, th' immortal buds that blow,
Around thy beauteous form th' unfading bloom shall twine.

" A form not comely less than that which beam'd
So lovely on the ravish'd view
Of muse-rapt Youth, who roving on the brow
Of lofty Pindus, laurel-crown'd,

Paris in July, August, and September, 1791. He also at the head of his infernal pikemen formed the guard which closely surrounded the scaffold on which the late King of France was guillotined. Immediately after the head of the unfortunate monarch fell into the basket, he and his whole troop struck up a hymn he had composed for the occasion, and danced and sung, like so many Savages, round and round the scaffold!

In 1793 he is said to have met his fate, for he was killed, together with both his sons, in an action with the advocates of Royalty in La Vendee.

Her lucid limbs the laughing Goddess lave
n gay Castalia's beauty-purpled wave,
With step-arresting wonder saw!
"Fir'd with the sight, he seiz'd the burning steel-
The marble melting into life,
Admiring Greece beheld,
And bow'd to Beauty's Queen the conscious knee.
But ah! less pleas'd, the Sculptor sigh'd to see
So faintly on the marble trac'd
The for m that bloom'd more lovely in his breast.
"O! me, unequal to the darling theme,
With sacred fire, ye Powers of Poesy, fill!
Or if from Ida's haughty hill
With bold delight ye trace the torrent flood
That foams and roars and rushes to the main;
Or if enamour'd more of attic sweets,
By CALLIROE's rose-enamell'd rill
Ye cull the mellow lay;
Or TEMPE's grateful groves among,
With the smiling wreathe of song,
Caressing Loves repay.
"The muse-collected wreathe to twine,
An offering worthy Beauty's shrine!
O bring, ye zephyr-pinion'd Hours,
That fan the tender Spring!——
Bring, O bring the lovely hue
Of rose-bud nurs'd with nectary dew;
Bring the glow that gilds the sky,

When

When from her rosy bower
AURORA, blushing, bids her bridegroom hie.
" Ah! rather, fair EUPHROSYNE!—
Ah! rather on my fancy rise
The living lustre of thine eyes!
Ah! warm and lucid on my flutt'ring heart,
Let one propitious smile
With genius-kindling radiance roll!
Anon, the magic ray
With Beauty's fairest tints shall flush my glowing soul,
Till on the fondly-gliding lay
The gay reflection flit
More brilliant than the varied blaze
Of mingling earth and skies,
Which o'er yon limpid streamlet's dimply maze,
In wavy lustre, loves to play,
What time, by Vernal VENUS led,
The April Loves, a laughing train,
In sunny shower descend.
" Fragrance-fraught, their fairy feet
Joy-bounding Earth delights to meet,
As join'd with woodland Nymphs
And universal PAN
They celebrate with elven tread
The triumph of their Queen.
Reviving Nature chearful lifts her head,
And bids her smiles o'er fields of virgin-green

The purple blush of joy diffuse;
While young DESIRE, with bosom heaving high,
Frequent breathes the flame-fed sigh,
And gazes fondly-fix'd on all his new Delights.
"O thou! for whom I breathe the frequent sigh,
Thou fairest blossom of the blooming year!
O! might my Love-sick lay
With voice of that wild warbler vie,
In blest Arabia's balmy grove,
Who round the Rose, fair object of his love,*
Revolves his amorous flight,
Till odour-drunk, and dizzy with delight,
Beside his blushing bride he fall:
O then! around the fairest *Rose* †
That blows on FLORA's fragrant lap,
My fond, fond Lay would flutter still!
And still, the warbled theme would be,
EUPHROSYNE! EUPHROSYNE!
"EUPHROSYNE!—with sudden bound
The magic sound
My conscious soul excites;
Like some stray kidling, whom the devious sweets

Of

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* The Nightingale is said by the Orientals to be enamoured of the Rose, which is, indeed, in those climates extremely odoriferous.

† *No Rose that blows*, sung by Mrs. CROUCH in *Zelima* and *Azor*.

Of distant herb had sever'd from the flock,
If chance, sweet sound of shepherd's reed
Salute his ear,
Light skipping o'er the fleeting field he bounds,
Nor once remits his wild career,
Till rushing on his glowing mind,
In all their greeny grace array'd
Of laughing meads, and mazy rills,
His darling haunts he gain.
" I see! I see th' enchanting Fair!——
Rob'd in all her lovely state,
From my Fancy's faithful seat,
'Mid the gay tumult of my soul,
I see the smiling image rise!
Her sweetly gliding path
Where'er the Goddess bends,
In purple lustre swim the sequious Loves.
" But fraught, ah me! with amorous woe,
From their shoulders plumy pride
Depend their quivers glancing sheen.
And see! the silver bow they bend——
And swift in rosy smiles involv'd
The pointed lightnings fly.
Ah me! my flaming heart they pierce—
I die!——I die!——I die!——
Delicious wound! O Death divine!
O arrows poison'd with delight!
O dart deep-barb'd with bliss!

But

" But who is he, that dares so nigh,
With eagle eye,
On that Meridian Sun to gaze?
On that Meridian Sun, whose sloping rays
Our fainting souls can scarce sustain!
" Unmelted, mid æthereal flame,
Much favour'd youth of COMUS' train,
O KELLY! can'st thou move?
Can'st thou touch that Angel-frame,
Nor feel th' extatic shock of Love?
" Ah! no, fond Youth, no mimic Lover
Those impassion'd eyes betray,
Stars blue twinkling, that discover
More than words of fire convey.
From no fictitious passion flows
That mazy flood of modulated flame:
For ah! though rich the native note
Of song-enamour'd Nightingale,
So sweet a strain
Could he attain,
Diffus'd not Love the liquid Lay!
" Yes, from his soul's desir-dilated cell
The little Syren pours th' impassion'd song;
Down Fairy Love's delightful dell
The gliding Graces guide,
In fondly-winding maze, the warbling tide:
While from th' adjoining myrtle shade,
Where hidden hangs their leafy couch of Love,

With

With more enchanting trill,
His tender mate,
PHILOMELA, Syren sweet,
Subjoins the fond reply;
The mingling melody
Glides glowing down the rapture-trembling grove:
From every silent spray
Song-smitten warblers wond'ring list the lay,
While from his grotto's green alcove,
In breathless extacy,
Collected Zephyr, panting with delight,
The tuneful toxication drinks profound;
Heedless, the while, of flow'rets gay,
That smile enamour'd round.
Fair daughters of the vernal plain!
Unsipt ye spread th' ambrosial bloom,
And suing shed your sweet perfume,
And court his balmy kiss in vain.
" O thou! by whose imperious charms,
Their paly rays obscur'd
The heavenly groupe of British Beauties plain,
Fair CIRCE of the scenic field! I come
A voluntary Slave:
The soul-enchanting draught I crave,
And court the blissful bane.
" On me, on me the potent spell employ!
O lap my captive soul in silken folds
Of that dædalian labyrinth of song!

O! bin

O! bind me with the rosy link
Of Love-entwined charms!
Swelling bosom's magic play,
Of polish'd arm the tap'ring sway,
Fairy wave of witching waist;
And with the graceful gesture join
The furtive force of sidelong ray,
And robber-glance that bears the soul away.
And O! withall the dimply magic twine,
That plays delightful round that mouth divine!
"Enough, enough—the soul-invading blaze
My beauty-dazzled sense can bear no more!——
O! guide me giddy to the bower of Bliss!
There on thy downy lap inclin'd,
O! grant me such a kiss,
As Guardian Angels give,
When near celestial bounds,
The soaring Saint they greet,
And smiling lead him to the blissful seat.
"Vain tale of future joy!
Let air-fed Bigots hug the meagre hope:
To me, O better fate! be given
That certain bliss, that richer heaven,
That little paradise of love,
Which on that heaving bosom blooms.
There 'mid the lillies of delight,
That wave in breeze of fond desire,
O! let me press the panting Joys!

O! let me prove the draught divine!*
" Fill, fair Incantress, fill the magic bowl,
Till the foaming bliss run o'er.
O! let me quaff the lovely folly!
O! let me lave with frenzy fond
The love-parch'd longing of my soul!
" Wisdom! I bid thy weary way farewel!
And leave to fools thy frigid lore."

Mrs. CROUCH, within these last two years, has made rapid advances towards perfection in her profession. Her voice is not only extensive, but extremely plaintive and melodious: better calculated for the delightful songs of simplicity, than the *bravura* style; yet she has recently been successful in the latter, as those who have heard her in the *Siege of Belgrade*, &c. will amply attest.

Since her Performance of *Miss Alton* in the *Heiress*, she has acquired, and deservedly, much celebrity as an Actress, and has appeared in many sentimental and tragic characters with great

* To those who are inclined, from prudery, malevolence, or a boorish antipathy to the Muses, to fasten on the innocent play of imagination an improper meaning, the Author shall only say, *Honi soit qui mal y pense.*

great *eclat*. Several great judges, who have witnessed her powers in private performances, are of opinion, that she would, with practice, become a first-rate Tragedian; she has likewise strong Comic powers: but the Public would be unwilling to barter her voice for any thing less pleasing. In the combination of good acting with good singing and distinct articulation, she is unrivalled at present on the Stage.

The benevolence of Mrs. CROUCH is well known. Possessing the best of hearts, her abilities have always been too circumscribed to accomplish her intentions.

The following lines of a favourite Author [who thus speaks of her in his Farewel to London] having appeared in the former editions, we shall conclude the present with them.

"And CROUCH, endued with every gentle grace,
A voice celestial, and an angel face:
Sweet harmonist! whose silver tones impart
The soothing melody that charms the heart;
No more shall I, with the admiring throng,
Enraptur'd listen to thy magic song;
Nor shall I, but by Fancy's powerful aid,

Behold

Behold thee as the gentle *Adelaide*,
Or as *Ophelia*, claim the tender tear,
While unadorn'd, thy voice shall sooth the ear;
But the prophetic Muse with joy reveals
What merit, ever diffident, conceals:
Delighted, sees thee join the tragic train,
And in soft numbers pensively complain.
Thine is the skill, and thine the happy art,
With sacred sounds to elevate the heart:
When HANDEL's harmony divinely flows,
With holy rapture every bosom glows;
Aided by thee, we feel th' angelic strain,
And find, well pleas'd, a new CECILIA reign."

MR.

Mr. HARLEY.

COVENT-GARDEN.

HOWEVER the heroes and heroines of the Drama may contemn the opprobium so generally affixed by the world to the profession of a Player, they are themselves principally the cause of its *attaching* so much disrespect in Society. Suddenly elevated from obscurity and indigence to affluence and fame, very few of them have sufficient prudence and good sense to make the esteem of their moral keep pace with that of their professional character; and the only use they in general make of Fortune's bounties is an unbounded indulgence, in the extremes of dissipation and fashionable follies.

The present subject of these memoirs, by changing his name from DAVIES to HARLEY, on his assuming the *Buskin*, seems to have been aware of this; but, although he was appre-

hensive of stigmatizing himself in the country, his success in London would certainly justify him in throwing off the mask.

The first employment of this gentleman was that of a Banker's Clerk, at No. 28, Cornhill, where he served four years. The slow gradation of rising in that line, and the improbability of ever making a fortune in it, without a capital to begin with, alienated the views of his riper years from the pursuits of business. His temper was too warm and impatient to submit to the plodding business of the counter.

When his engagement expired with the Bankers, he threw himself in the way of Fortune, wishing rather to suffer under embarrassments, with the chance of a propitious event, than barely to exist without any chance of those lucky hits which frequently come when least expected.—He occasionally engaged himself as a Lottery Clerk. He was afterwards engaged by an Insurance Broker, at a handsome permanent salary; and it was here that he first imbibed a *penchant* for the Drama.

The company before the curtain proved at first

first as attractive to him as the performances on the stage. His dress and address were perfectly genteel. A greater familiarity with the manners of the Actors drew him into closer observation of their respective merits; and suggested to him the idea of attempting a profession, which would not only gratify his ambition, if successful, but add largely to his income. The late Mr. HENDERSON was at that time the first Performer on the Stage; and our Hero had studied, with the most minute attention, every performance of that celebrated favourite of the Public, of which many similarities may be perceived in several of Mr. HARLEY's representations.

Having for many months considered the Drama with the greatest diligence, in which he was assisted by HENDERSON, with whom he became personally acquainted, and having perfected himself in the theoretical part, he resolved to practise.

In the country, he judged that by changing his name he might escape the injury such an attempt might do him in the eye of mercantile people; and that, if unsuccessful, he might return to his situation without a blush.

For

For this purpose he obtained letters of recommendation from some friends in London, whom he entrusted with his design, to Alderman HARVEY, of Norwich, and through the interest of that gentleman, he made his first attempt in that city, as *Richard the Third*, on the 20th of April, 1785.

But his success was not adequate to his expectations. Many of the inhabitants of Norwich were rather too free in expressing their disapprobation, particularly to his *Comus*. But he was not discouraged; and as he dressed well, had plenty of money in his pocket, and a confident address, he got into genteel company, and ingratiated himself so much with the leading people, that they made a point of supporting him on the Stage. Practice improved his talents as an Actor, and custom made them agreeable to his audience, who in a short time celebrated him as the most accomplished Performer that had been seen there for many years. He continued the hero of the Norwich Company several seasons. His fame reached London in such terms as gave reason to expect great profit from his performances, and he was engaged at a genteel

teel salary by Mr. HARRIS for Covent-Garden Theatre, where he made his first appearance in the character of *Richard the Third*, about the beginning of October, 1789.

To decide on the abilities of a Performer in his first or even second season would be uncandid; but a few observations, from which it is presumed he may benefit, are surely admissible. Nature has not been very liberal to Mr. HARLEY. Though his person is agreeable, his face is inexpressive and obscure: his voice, though powerful, is harsh and inflexible. He has studied the transitions, the tones, and cadences of Mr. HENDERSON, and incessantly endeavours to imitate them; but an insurmountable monotony will for ever preclude all chance of success. In tender impassioned passages, his tones are too much inflated, and his agitation too violent. This was very conspicuous in his performance in Mr. HAYLEY's *Eudora*, a Tragedy now consigned to oblivion.

Notwithstanding these advantages, Mr. HARLEY has repeatedly represented *Richard* and *Lear* with tolerable *eclat*; and as he is extremely

extremely assiduous, will probably, in time, deserve a larger portion of panegyric.

At the commencement of the Season 1791 and 1792, he discharged himself, for that most important of all reasons,——a deficiency of salary. Hitherto he had been content to obtain fame, with only forty shillings per week; but he now began to discover that *money* was more substantial; and after much altercation, and many a message between him and Mr. BARLOW, the Gentleman who manages these matters, it was agreed that he should have five pounds per week, with which he declared himself satisfied.

MRS. WHITLOCK,

HAY-MARKET,

HAS sprung from a root which has produced some of our best Theatrical Performers; and it will seem rather surprising that the sister of Mrs. SIDDONS and of Mr. JOHN KEMBLE should want the abilities requisite for a tolerable Actress. But genius is no more universal in a family than it is hereditary; for while the one daughter of Mr. ROGER KEMBLE is adored by the Public, the other passes without the slightest notice of approbation.

Miss ELIZABETH KEMBLE, now Mrs. WHITLOCK, is sister to Mrs. SIDDONS, and was apprenticed to a Mantua-maker in Leominster, as her father, the Manager of an itinerant Company of Comedians, was anxious that none of his children should ever come

come upon the Stage—a very laudable wish in all parents; but a wish, in the present instance, which if it had been conformed to, must have kept his family in obscurity and indigence, compared with its present eminence, and must have deprived the Drama of some of its brightest ornaments.

The example of her sisters and brothers seduced Mrs. WHITLOCK, notwithstanding the prescriptions of her father, to join the Thespian train; and she had performed several years in Provincial Theatres, though with little *eclat*, when the great success of Mrs. SIDDONS in London, in 1783, induced the Proprietors of Drury-Lane to engage our Heroine, in hopes that there would be more than common ability in every branch of a family which had produced such a phænomenon. But they soon discovered their mistake; ——or, rather, the Public discovered it for them. Miss E. KEMBLE attempted many second and third-rate parts in Tragedy, but she was very indifferently received, and sometimes her exertions were even pointedly disapproved of. She did not continue more than one or two seasons at Drury-Lane, when

Mr. WHITLOCK, Manager of the company at Newcastle upon Tyne, married her, and with him she went to be the leading Actress of his corps. She has now been in that situation several years, and would not have been introduced here, had not her sister-in-law, Mrs. STEPHEN KEMBLE, been prevented from attending her engagement at the summer Theatre in 1791 so early as was requisite, when Mrs. WHITLOCK was brought to town for the purpose of being her substitute. She performed *Queen Margaret* in the *Battle of Hexham*, *Julia* in the *Surrender of Calais*, &c. but without giving great satisfaction. Her person, voice, and countenance, which are strongly marked with the family likeness of the house of KEMBLE, are, however, too coarse and masculine; and on such a little Stage, to behold such an Amazonian whining the tender tales of a love sick girl, frequently gave a burlesque and laughable appearance to that which was designed to be extremely pathetic and sublime. Mrs. WHITLOCK probably had hopes that, like her sister Mrs. SIDDONS, her second attempt in the Metropolis might prove extremely

tremely brilliant; but we are of opinion, that although she possesses sufficient abilities to make some figure in the country, she never will be able to gather laurels in the capital.

Mr. S. KEMBLE,

HAY-MARKET,

IS one of the great family of KEMBLE, whose elevation has been occasioned by Mrs. SIDDONS: we must therefore refer the reader to that Lady's Memoirs for the genealogy of our present subject, who is her youngest Brother.

Mr. STEPHEN KEMBLE, like the rest of the family, being not designed for the Stage, was put apprentice to an Apothecary, whose name was CHEVAUSE, in Coventry or Worcester, where he remained several years a disciple of GALEN. The example of his brother and sisters, who were by this time upon the Stage, he did not view with indifference or disapprobation, but rather with envy; and he long considered it a cruelty that a genius like his should be cramped over a pestle and mortar by the proud ideas of his father.

From

From the fear of losing the friendship of his relations he suppressed his ardour, until he was obliged to decamp for his visits to the *till*, which he sometimes called on for a recommendation to the apple stall, or the gingerbread baker. Ashamed of what is too often done by boys who are entrusted in a shop, and what in fact was but a trifle, he retreated without any signal, and enlisted in a strolling Company; a situation which he embraced with pleasure.

A strong voice, a dignified rant, and a tumid action, obtained him the name of a good Tragedian in the country; and from this report he was engaged for Dublin, where he performed with some applause, and where his brother JOHN then was. Mrs. SIDDONS had at this time just commenced her glorious career in London, and Mr. HARRIS, hearing that the Managers of Drury-Lane intended to engage her brother, who possessed great abilities, dispatched a messenger in haste to forestall them; but this Mercury, who was instructed to bring over the *great Kemble*, mistaking the bodily for the mental superiority, engaged Mr. STEPHEN KEMBLE,

who, from corpulence, was certainly the biggest man.

His first appearance at Covent-Garden was as *Othello*, in 1783. Never was the heroic Moor so literally murdered. Many exclamations excited laughter; and so fond was he of Miss SATCHELL, the gentle *Desdemona*, that in embracing her he would have a kiss; the collision left one side of her face quite black, much to the entertainment of the audience. He afterwards performed *Bajazet*, *Richmond*, &c. but with so little approbation, that though Mr. HARRIS was obliged to lose a charming Actress, Miss SATCHELL, who had married him, he was discharged at the conclusion of the season, and his wife went with him.

Since that time he has followed the fortune of that Lady, and has been for some winters Manager in Edinburgh. He performs at the Haymarket in the Summer, where he is merely useful in sentimental *Old Men*. His corpulence and nasal utterance render him disagreeable; but the merit of his wife procures him the indulgence of the Public.

He

He did not attend to his engagement at the Hay-market in the Summer of 1791, as he was wholly occupied in attempting to continue in the management of the Edinburgh Theatre.

MRS. E. KEMBLE.

HAY-MARKET.

THE Drama, though generally allowed to be eminently useful, as instrumental to the interests of virtue, has in all ages, since its institution, had so much prejudice to encounter, that nothing can more evince its importance than the success which has attended it, notwithstanding the difficulties through which it has been destined to struggle. The followers of this interesting sphere of amusement and source of morality have, it must be confessed, seldom been distinguished for the purity of their manners and the rectitude of their conduct; and though, in the Theatrical profession, as well as in most provinces of life, many respectable members have undoubtedly been found, yet the general odium on the character of an Actor, which is regularly transmitted from age to age, had not abated

abated, and mankind have never been disposed to form a proper estimation of such worth, but have considered them as a species of beings calculated only to promote the purposes of transitory diversion, "to fret their hour upon the Stage;" but never to have the privilege of being admitted to domestic intercourse or friendly endearment. Such, however, has been the progress of philosophy and the arts, that society begins to be characterised for more liberal sentiments; and, in this country at least, an Actor who possesses solid claims to distinction in his art, and whose private life is marked by such moral qualities as deserve esteem, is not, by the mere circumstance of his calling, excluded from that protection and regard which the members of every other profession, in which genius is required, have always been able to obtain. But, perhaps, the general influence of more refined maxims than were wont to prevail in former periods, has diffused itself over the votaries of the Sock and Buskin; and, by improving their principles, and amending their lives, has gradually subdued those unfavourable prejudices which, in the earlier

earlier states of the Drama, were but too well founded. It is certain that, whatever the condition of the Stage may be, in other countries, there have been of late years many Theatrical Characters among us who have been as much distinguished by private merit as by their public talents; and who, no less esteemed for the one than admired for the other, have enjoyed the protection and friendship of persons of the highest rank.

The lady who is at present the subject of our notice, while she raised a very considerable share of Theatrical fame, has uniformly supported such a character in private life, as no malice has been base enough to slander with the least exceptionable imputation.

Mrs. ELIZABETH KEMBLE was born in London, and is the daughter of Mr. SATCHELL, of Great Pulteney-street, Golden-square, Musical Instrument-Maker to the PRINCE of WALES. She had from early life indulged a strong propensity to the Stage, but knowing that such pursuits were highly disagreeable to her family, she was obliged to conceal her inclinations, though she was incapable of suppressing them; and, therefore, whatever

whatever studies she might think necessary to prepare her for her favourite profession, she was obliged to prosecute in secrecy, and had very seldom an opportunity of promoting her improvements by the examples which theatrical exhibitions held forth to her.

After devoting as much leisure as she could steal from the observation of her relations to the attentive study of the profession, which she secretly determined to assume, she made application to Mr. BAKER, a Musician connected with Covent-Garden Theatre, with whom, when her family perceived that it was impossible to subdue her tendency to a Theatrical life, she was permitted to enter into articles, for a due qualification in such musical characters as her vocal powers and the general cast of her talents properly suited. Mr. BAKER discovered such qualities in his fair pupil as promised to raise her to a considerable rank, and therefore he soon introduced her to Mr. HARRIS, the Manager of that Theatre, whose taste and judgment could not be blind to the very conspicuous merits of Miss SATCHELL, and who immediately offered an engagement, which her friends permitted

permitted her to accept, and she made her first appearance in the Character of *Polly* in the *Beggar's Opera*, in 1780, which she performed with so much simplicity, tenderness, and unaffected delicacy, that though the Opera, admirable as it is, was rendered by frequent exhibition flat and uninviting, she seemed to renew its popularity and attraction, and was generally deemed the best *Polly* that had appeared since the original representative.

Excellent as Miss SATCHELL was in this character, it was soon found that her powers demanded something of an higher order, and she therefore assumed *Ophelia*, *Desdemona*, *Juliet*, and other parts of a similar kind, with the most interesting success. But the Character which principally established her reputation with the Public, and which procured her the warmest support of criticism, as well as excited ths celebrations of Poetry, was *Adelaide*, in the *Count of Narbonne*, a Tragedy of Mr. JEPHERSON; in which her performance was so exquisitely pathetic, that it is but justice to attribute the success of the Piece chiefly to her exertions. Here, however,

ever, it would be improper to pass over Mrs. POPE, (then Miss YOUNGE) who not only displayed great force of Tragic Merit in the *Countess*, but by her tender assiduity to encourage the talents of Miss SATCHELL, fully proved that her private virtues are upon a level with her public abilities. It is not necessary to enumerate the several characters which Miss SATCHELL afterwards assumed; it is sufficient to say, that, in the gentler province of Tragedy, where refined and interesting expression was required, her influence over the affections was as powerful as her delineation of nature was vivid and beautiful. After she had been about three years on Covent-Garden Theatre, with merited distinction, Mr. STEPHEN KEMBLE, a brother of Mrs. SIDDONS, was engaged at that House; and in a short time so strong an attachment arose between him and Miss SATCHELL, that with the concurrence of their mutual relations, a marriage very speedily took place. Unfortunately for the admirers of the Drama in London, Mr. KEMBLE's discharge occasioned his wife's separation from Covent-Garden Theatre at the close of that season.

In

In 1783, after taking leave of the metropolis, Mr. and Mrs. KEMBLE performed at Liverpool, Edinburgh, and other respectable places in these kingdoms, where she constantly became the reigning favourite, and was always distinguished by the eulogiums of the Muse. The place, however, in which this charming actress has made the strongest impression since she quitted London, and in which she seemed chiefly disposed to display her talents, is Exeter, where she has been received with a warmth of admiration that no Actress was ever able to obtain before her time, and where her residence was rendered the more desirable, as the inhabitants treated her with the most flattering marks of private esteem.

Pleasant, however, as her situation at Exeter must have been, it was impossible that talents so valuable and conspicuous should be suffered to remain thus remote from London; and therefore Mr. COLMAN, whose knowledge in Theatrical matters was the result of great abilities, extensive literature, and long experience, made overtures to Mr. and Mrs. KEMBLE for an engagement at the

Hay-

Haymarket Theatre, which they accepted, upon terms adequate to their talents and reputation. The return of our amiable heroine to London was a proper compliment from the Manager to the wishes of the Public; though, at the same time, it certainly indicated a suitable regard to the credit of his Theatre, and consequently the interest of his property. She first appeared in the Summer of 1786, in the character of *Ophelia*; her performance of which shewed that, though her judgment was expanded, her sensibility had not abated in delicacy, softness, and expression. Since that period she has assumed various characters of sprightly Comedy and rustic simplicity, which might have been deemed incompatible with her talents and habitudes, but in which her success was founded upon chaste humour, truth, and nature.

But the part in which this excellent Actress has fully established her claims to the highest degree of Theatrical distinction is *Yarico*, a character which is pourtrayed with such an expression of artless and native softness, as will ever render that charming Opera a fa-

vourite with every lover of pathetic simplicity. If Mrs. KEMBLE had never appeared in any other character than *Yarico*, the Public must have allowed her the tribute of its warmest approbation; and, indeed, to the credit of the taste and feeling of the times, her representation of it has been universally, and in the most fervent manner, sanctioned by public admiration.

MR.

Mr. PALMER, Jun.

HAY-MARKET.

IF we were to calculate the progressive improvement of this young Gentleman by the great improvements his Father had made since his *entreé*, we might predict highly in his favour. Mr. JOHN PALMER, sen. when he first came on the Stage, was looked upon as one of the most contemptible of all Actors; but now the scene is reversed, and he is looked upon as one of the most eminent. His son, our present subject, although he did not at once astonish the Town by the splendour of his abilities, has nevertheless shewn the green powers which may be ripened into excellence by proper cultivations.

It does not appear that Mr. PALMER, jun. was designed for the Stage; for we have reason

reason to think, he would have been initiated in another profession, had not the embarrassed state of his Fathers's pecuniary concerns bafled his best intentions in favour of his son, who being a chip of the old block, was happy to avail himself of any excuse for adopting a line of life, which held out the prospect of at once enabling him to gratify his passions. Accordingly he made his *debut* at the Hay-market, in the Summer of 1791, and performed the *Prince of Wales*, in *Henry IVth.*——a Character in Mrs. Inchbald's new Comedy of *Next Door Neighbours*, and several other parts, in which his genteel youthful appearance, and his modest manner, together with the circumstance of his being the son of so great a favourite, interested the audience in his behalf, and induced them to give him such encouragement, as occasionally brought forth some signs of latent ability. He obtained an engagement in the Theatre, and if he could assume a little more confidence and energy, he might soon arrive beyond mediocrity in the sentimental walk. But we fear that the hereditary dissipation, which

which he seems to enjoy largely from his father, will divert his attention from the study of the profession he has embraced. His amours are already somewhat curious, and may perhaps, at a future period, be noticed in this work.

MRS.

MRS. HARLOWE.

COVENT-GARDEN.

HERE we behold a Lady, who, despising the common partialities of her sex for youth, vigour, and beauty, seeks the comforts of a matrimonial life——without the ceremonies —in the arms of age and infirmity. Whether it is the Platonic or the *Plutonic* system that induces her to rivet her affections on Mr. WALDRON of Drury-Lane Theatre, is a point which we cannot ascertain; or whether it is the gratification she feels in wearing the *Breeches* at home, with as much *eclat* as she does on the Stage, yet so it is, that this Lady in her amours chooses to be singular.

Mrs. HARLOWE, who assumes this *novelist* name, because she thought it would read agreeably in a Play-bill, had seen a good deal of service in many hard campaigns before she was enrolled in a Summer Corps, of which

which Mr. WALDRON was the Commander, and whose scene of action lay in the vicinity of the Metropolis. She did not confine herself to the assault and capture of the good opinion of her audience; but well knowing that success is frequently obtained by stratagem, she laid a mine for the purpose of ensnaring the affections of her General, and carried her point so completely, that when the troops were disbanded, previous to the new arrangements for Winter quarters, Mr. WALDRON took her into his own *private service*, and in the ensuing Spring he procured her an engagement at Sadler's Wells.

For such a Theatre her abilities were excellently calculated: being a tolerable Singer and Actress, gifted with a neat person in the dress of either sex, and possessed of a good flow of spirits and some humour, she at once became a constellation at that place of amusement. In recitative Pieces, in Pantomimes, and in all the motley mixture of Entertainments, she gave the greatest satisfaction, and both as an Actress and as a Singer she acquired such a degree of reputation as induced the Managers of Covent Garden House

House to article her among the Members of their Company.

She made her *debut* at that Theatre Royal about four years ago: and she acted wisely in not attempting the first walk, which she must soon have found herself incapable of supporting. The second and third-rate parts she has entirely aimed at; and as she is a neat figure in Breeches, has much vivacity, can sing a little, and has a considerable knowledge of the Stage business, she has met with approbation from the Public. In pert Chambermaids, and characters of that complexion, she is entitled to praise, and fully merits the rank she holds in the Theatre.

MR.

MR. WALDRON.

DRURY-LANE.

FORTUNE is sometimes bestowed by the greatest accidents. This Gentleman is an instance of the assertion; he perhaps would long since have been obliged to quit the Metropolis, had it not been, that one day he chanced to be walking behind the scenes, when Mr. GARRICK and others were settling some important matters relative to the Theatrical Fund. They wanted a person to take an active part in the management, but knew of no one to fix on in particular: and WALDRON happening to pass in the moment of deliberation, Mr. GARRICK proposed him, which was instantly assented to. Thus, by accident,

accident, he was appointed to a situation which links him in such a manner with the concerns of the Theatre, that it must be very gross conduct indeed that can occasion his discharge.

Although age has placed his seal on Mr. WALDRON's countenance, yet she does not seem to have laid her cold hand on his heart. During his summer excursions at Hammersmith, Windsor, &c. where he often acted as Manager of a troop, he became acquainted with Mrs. HARLOWE, of Covent-Garden Theatre. The flame of love was kindled in his breast at sixteen; and, luckily for him, the object of his affection was not obdurate.—In return for her kindness he exerted his influence, and principally by that procured her the situation she now holds. The tender fair-one was extremely grateful; for, as a requital of the obligation, while they lived together, she corrected him for his follies in the most *spirited* and *feeling* manner.

Mr. WALDRON's line of acting has almost wholly been confined to *Old Men*, in Comedy. He imitates the manner of the late SHUTER, but with such an overflow of colouring, grimace,

mace, and gesture, that in London, where there is much chaste and excellent acting, it fails of its aim and becomes disgusting. A disagreeable lisp, and forced tremour of voice, also lessen the little merit he possesses.

MR.

Mr. POWELL,

COVENT-GARDEN.

LIKE Mr. BADDELEY, was first occupied in pleasing the palate; and his success as a disciple of *Heliogabalus* was equal to his success as a disciple of *Thespis*. When very young he leaped at once from the kitchen to the Stage, and for a long time he had much reason to regret the change, since, in gratifying his vanity with a *truncheon* and *copper lace*, he had frequent occasion to lament the want of *solid pudding*.

The first time we find him comfortably situated is in the Bath Theatre, where for several years he represented a list of parts, almost the same as those he is now in possession of at Covent-Garden; and as his wife, who is sister to Mrs. WARD of the Drury-Lane Company, was also engaged there, their joint salaries amounted to a tolerable income;

and Mr. POWELL was esteemed both in public and private. But in 1789, he absented himself a few nights from his duty in Bath purposely to perform in Salisbury, which offended the Managers so much that they discharged him.

He was engaged at Covent-Garden Theatre about four years ago, and since that time he has made himself very useful to the Managers and agreeable to the Public. The line of characters he principally sustains are the second or third-rate Old Men; and although he appears in parts of another complexion, yet he always acquits himself very respectably, and indeed he never attempts any thing of sufficient importance to render him disagreeable, supposing his talents were less commendable than they are.

MR.

Mr. BARRET,

HAY-MARKET.

ALTHOUGH we cannot devote any part of this work to the Memoirs of this little Sage, yet he possesses a sufficient quantity of merit to claim a small record. He has been engaged in the Hay-market Theatre many years, and for a long time the most important duty confided to his charge was the delivery of a message; but he was so fortunate as to be cast for the part of *Orator Mum* in O'KEEFFE's Farce of *The Son in Law*, which he personated with such natural simplicity as to gain particular distinction, and to induce the Managers to put him forward in some trifling characters of *Old Men*, &c. which he now represents with much satisfaction to the Public. His appearance, voice, and manner, are peculiar to himself, and excellently calculated to heighten the Comic scene; and

we are surprised that he never yet has been enlisted in either of the winter corps, where for the *Apothecary* in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the *Starved Friar* in the *Duenna*, he is singularly formed to succeed.

MR.

MR. THOMPSON

COVENT-GARDEN,

HAS been so long upon the boards of Covent-Garden Theatre in the humble capacity of *King*, *Lord*, *Officer*, and *Attendant*, that his memoirs are as uninteresting behind, as his exertions generally are before the curtain; yet we must confess that in Old Men he sometimes delivers a tender passage with great feeling; but he is made so much the pack-horse of every evening, and that in such obscure parts, that whatever judgment he has, it must be smothered by his load of business. He is now too old to think of attaining any greater eminence in his profession, and although he can scarcely be known by name to the frequenters of the Theatre, yet he must be well known in the Green-Room by the repeated calls made upon him for his services: and in the cast for which he is selected, we know none that would discharge the duty better.

MR. CUBITT.

COVENT-GARDEN.

IT will surprise those who are not previously acquainted with the circumstance, to hear that this Gentleman was first introduced to public life as a Singer, a line which he never now attempts. But it is still more surprising that, a few years ago, he should have been the principal Singer at Vauxhall Gardens.

He exerted his vocal powers not only at Vauxhall but also in Dublin, where he was received with a slight degree of favour. But he soon found that they were insufficient to secure him permanent applause, or a permanent engagement; and having obtained a situation in Covent-Garden Theatre, about seven or eight years ago, he did all in his power to make himself useful as an Actor rather than eminent as a Singer, and he has succeeded; for few Performers assume a more motley

motley cast of parts, though none of them were ever designed to stand very forward upon the canvas. He has now entirely declined the musical line, and he has some merit In Comedy. The character which he personates with most excellence is *Gibbet* in the *Beaux Stratagem*, which he *looks* so completely, that it is impossible to mistake him for any thing but a Highwayman. He looks not less successfully the character of a Turkish Goaler.

MRS. WHITFIELD.

HAY-MARKET,

THIS lady is wife to Mr. WHITFIELD, of Drury-Lane Theatre, and has followed his fortunes for many years past: to recount her memoirs, therefore, would be to repeat a great part of his. She was engaged with him several seasons at Covent-Garden House, and sustained a very respectable line of business; but when he left his situation there, she of course accompanied him, and she has not yet been able to reinstate herself in either of the Winter Houses.

For several seasons last past she has performed at the Summer Theatre, where she is found very useful in second or third-rate parts of genteel Comedy. She also occasionally steps into the Tragic walk. Her powers, though far from being great, render her

her of considerable value in any company, for she seldom offends, and frequently pleases: her countenance is, however, better suitedfor the haughty dame than the affable woman of fashion.

MR.

MR. EDWIN.

HAY-MARKET,

HERE we behold an instance of the absurdity of hereditary employments and honours. It has ever been a maxim with philosophers to ridicule the custom of placing a great man's son to succeed him in an arduous situation, merely because he *is* his son; and however the advocates in favour of a reverence for antiquity, established law and usuage, order and subordination, may vindicate hereditary succession, as tending to prevent the anarchy and confusion arising from the collision of factions, yet we find the Stage a pure democracy, where merit alone is placed at the head of affairs; and on that account it would be very prejudicial to the Treasury of the Theatre if Mr. EDWIN were put in possession of all his Father's characters.

To the Memoirs of the late celebrated

EDWIN,

EDWIN, whose loss THALIA will long regret, we must refer for the family of this young gentleman. Born the son of so favourite an Actor, the Stage naturally became an early object of his ambition; and this predilection does not seem to have been discouraged by his father, as we find him on the boards at the Summer Theatre in 1778, performing the part of *Hengist* in the Tragedy of *Bonduca*, when he could not be more than nine or ten years old. This juvenile essay gained him great applause, and he fully merited it; for in acting and speaking he surpassed what could have been expected from a child of his age.

In Covent-Garden, as well as in the Haymarket Theatre, he for many years represented such characters as were suited to his youth; until a few years ago, having sprung up almost to manhood, he, both in the town and in the country, assumed the more regular walks of the Drama; and although his success was not great, yet he did not altogether fail in his attempts.

He was long the inseparable companion of the late Lord BARRYMORE, whose Private Thea-

Theatricals at Wargrave he assisted greatly by his abilities, and with whom he generally passed much of the winter season. About three years ago he became enamoured of Miss RICHARDS, a promising young Actress, who perf[illegible]med a few nights at Covent-Garden Theatre, and they were married; but matrimony was not so sweet to them as courtship, and frequent quarrels produced a separation. We cannot say which party was most to blame. Mrs. EDWIN, junior, is, we believe, now engaged in a country company.

Our young Hero has, for some seasons past, been engaged at the Summer Theatre, where he has not been able to gain much reputation in his father's line; indeed his person, which is handsome, and his general appearance and manner, seem to be better calculated for the Gentlemen or genteel Fops than any other class of characters.

Mr. ROCK.

HAY-MARKET.

IN delineating this little disciple of Momus, we shall not occupy a greater space than his importance in the dramatic corps demands; and we confess a consciousness of inability to make his memoirs half so entertaining in the perusal as his genuine humour occasionally is in the exhibition on the Stage. Imported from that histrionic nursery, Hibernia, he carries a strong evidence of his nativity on his tongue; and Limerick has to boast of giving birth to him, who represents with uncommon excellence, the manner of a majority of the inhabitants of that kingdom.

But it is not surprising, that he who was bred to the business of ornamenting heads, should so far have improved his own

own, as to be able to turn the peculiarities of his countrymen to advantage; and, although he at first discarded the comb and the puff to become an *Alexander the Great*, for which character his person is happily adapted; yet, after experiencing the hardships attendant on itinerant Companies, where all is gratification on the public Stage, and all is mortification at home at the table, he found it would be more conducive to the solid enjoyments of life to be a *Sub* in London than a Leader in the Country.

It would be uncandid to touch upon his merit as an Actor, in any other characters than those of Vulgar Irishmen, because he is forced into any other by sheer necessity. In Vulgar Irishmen, however, he is perfectly unrivalled, and that line of acting is not now inconsiderable. His performance in *Rosina* may rank, in point of excellence, with any other on the Stage. There is a hesitation and stupidity in his manner, and a vacant insensibility in his looks, which, aided by a rich brogue, render him excessively entertaining, and really admirable in those charac-

characters; and, it may be justly added, that what Mrs. SIDDONS is in Tragedy, Mrs. JORDAN in Comedy, or Mrs. BILLINGTON in Opera, Mr. ROCK is in *Vulgar Irishmen*. He naturally possesses much of the *vis comica*, and wants only attentive study to become a general favourite in that line.

MRS.

Mrs. ROCK,

COVENT-GARDEN,

IS a *literary* genius of the first class, whom we are surprised has not yet been ranked with the Mrs. INCHBALDS, the MissWILLIAMS's, the Miss BURNEYS, and the Mrs. ROBINSONS of the day. Her attachment for reading has somewhat impeded her Dramatic studies; and in proof of this, we cannot resist the inclination we feel to relate an anecdote of this Lady, which appeared in one of the public newspapers.

Mr. ROCK, who is also mentioned in this Work, brought in a piece of pork one afternoon, and desired that it might be roasted for dinner. Mrs. ROCK was in bed, busily employed in perusing a favourite Novel, which she could not upon any condition quit: she,

she, however, suspended the pork by a string before the fire, but could not leave her favourite book for the purpose of dressing herself; she therefore, in order to get her husband's dinner ready, and at the same time pursue the interesting story, pulled the bed close to the fire, and pushing her foot out at the bottom of it, lay devouring the novel, while at the same time she every now and then made the pork twirl round with her great toe!

Mrs. Rock performed a considerable time in the country, before she was enrolled under the banners of Covent-Garden. Her *forte* is entirely in *chambermaids*, for which her manner and person are perfectly calculated, and in general she represents them with much truth and spirit; but she is never entrusted with characters of importance.

MRS. CUYLER,

COVENT-GARDEN.

PRETENSIONS to merit in any line, naturally lead to an investigation of it: and such is the weakness of all theatrical candidates, that excepting the Lady before us, we believe there is not an individual in either Theatre but what is inclined to think favourably of their own talents. Such being the case, we will not expatiate on the abilities of Mrs. CUYLER, observing only, that though she cannot claim superiority as an Actress, she commands admiration as an elegant, beautiful woman.

Mrs. CUYLER is the daughter of a Gentleman of fortune, and was at a very early age taken under the care of a Maid of Honour, his relation. She received her education, and passed her juvenile days in St. James's Palace: and has frequently mixed

mixed in the childish diversions of the present Princesses. At the age of fifteen, while in the habit of a girl, she attracted the particular notice of Colonel CUYLER of the Guards, who became violently in love with her, and who adopted every means of obtaining her affection. The Colonel soon prevailed over her young heart, and persuaded her to elope;——he kept her in every respect like his wife; perfected her in a genteel education; provided her a chariot; and they lived together in Paris, London, and Dublin, in the most splendid stile.

The Colonel being obliged to go to India, parted from his fair one with great reluctance, and setled an annuity of two or three hundred pounds per annum on her for life. She sincerely regretted his absence for some months; but a turn for gaiety induced her to yield to the solicitations of Captain METCALF, who promised to provide her another carriage, and every indulgence she could desire; and as he was a very handsome agreeable man, she soon grew so fond of him, that after his pecuniary resources were exhausted, she supplied the deficiency, and

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even pawned her jewels to equip him for the West-Indies, where he found it necessary to go to recruit his fortune. He was lost returning home in the Ville de Paris.

During the honey-moon with the Captain she had often been solicited, but in vain, by Lord B———— ;—after his departure, she was accidentally met at Brighton by that Nobleman, who renewed his suit, and with some difficulty succeeded. He immediately sent her to London, with directions to take and furnish a house, and to lay in a stock of wines, &c. but at the very moment when he was preparing to follow her, he received a letter from his father, the Earl of H————, then at Bath, which obliged him to inform her, that the intended connexion could not now take place, as he must go and marry a Lady for whom he had long been intended, and to an union with whom all obstacles were now removed. His Lordship, however, sent orders to pay for every thing she had provided on his account, inclosed a bank note to herself, and in every respect acted with that generosity that characterises his family.

With Mr. HARRIS she lived two years; but

but the only gratification she received was in examining the pieces of different Authors, that were sent for approbation.—Mr. SHERIDAN was likewise her humble servant, and persuaded her, much against her own opinion, to come on the Stage. It would be tedious to enumerate all her admirers: we shall only mention, that she took very *Wild* and unprofitable flights; and was at last knocked down by an Auctioneer, whose affection, like the quick *Sands*, hardened as his tide of money ebbed.

On Col. CUYLER's return from India, a few years ago, he signified his intention of reinstating her as formerly; but on learning that she had been polluted by a Bourgeois, he altered his design. Mrs. CUYLER is of a hasty, violent temper, and we believe no one would like to encounter her resentment a second time: she has, however, a generous, warm heart, always ready to feel for and relieve the distressed. She continues on the Stage merely for the salary; and her wit, which is poignant and ready, has long been the terror of the Green-Room.

MR. SEDGWICK.

DRURY-LANE.

A FINE voice may prove as great a misfortune to a man, as a pretty face may to a woman. The acclamations of a company to the one, and the admiration and panegyric bestowed on the other, tend equally to corrupt the mind; to divert it from beneficial pursuits, and, by flattery, to delude it to ruin. Those, who from vanity devote themselves to the entertainment of clubs, seldom make a sincere friend, though they generally destroy their own fortunes: hence the numbers to be met with in this metropolis, who have been termed jolly fellows, but who find themselves deserted as their power of pleasing diminishes, and whose decline of life is embittered by the remembrance of their follies and misconduct in youth.

A voice without musical genius and industry,

try, is a dangerous accomplishment. If Mr. SEDGWICK had not naturally been gifted with vocal powers, he might, probably, have held a respectable rank among tradesmen; instead of which, by the deficiency of his ear, and his neglect of study, he is regarded with indifference as a Singer.

The employment for which he was originally designed, and which he followed a considerable time, in Budge-Row, Cannon-Street, was that of an Ironmonger. His power of voice made him courted by all those who loved a good Song; and he was invited to a great number of Societies, where his exertions were always loudly applauded; but the most celebrated was that at the Crown and Anchor, in the Strand, where he had the honour of singing the Anacreontic Song at every Meeting, and where he was looked on as a leader in the institution.

The dissipation of a public life made him neglect his private concerns, and finding that his business would not prosper without assiduity, and that his inclinations were immoveably fixed on company, he judged it most

proper to adopt that as a means of subsistence, which he had at first made his amusement. He officiated in many Concerts, and in the beginning of the season 1787, he made his *debut* at Drury-Lane, as *Artabanes*, in *Artaxerxes*.

A London audience is the most liberal in the world: if a young candidate possesses the natural requisites for the profession, he is indulged, at first, in the hope that he will refine them by art. Mr. SEDGWICK's voice being excellent, and his appearance agreeable, he met with general and great approbation; in consequence of which he demanded a very high salary for a noviciate, which was refused. Instigated by the partizans of the Royalty Theatre, at that time struggling to oppose the legal houses, he deserted Drury-Lane, and enlisted under the rival banners, where he soon found his error, and that a small *real* salary was better than a great *nominal* one.

The following season, however, he was happy to accept the terms at Drury-Lane which he had before refused. He certainly possesses the first bass voice at present to be heard

heard on theEnglish Stage; not so various and extensive as C. BANNISTER's, but it is more equal and uniform. What he might arrive at by study is impossible to say, for he seems to have studied little or nothing. In cadences he constantlypractises the vulgar and disgusting shake on the fifth key. This is borrowed from the Choristers. The late King of Prussia would have said to him, *Ill sent de l'Eglise!* It is a babarism which ought to be banished from the Stage, and from every audience where cultivated singing is expected.

MR. LAMASH.

THERE are several Gentlemen on the Stage who neglect the fairest opportunities of attaining perfection in their respective walks. When once they barely please, they never think of further improvement; but, flattered by their own vanity, and the negative approbation of the Public, are contented to creep on without endeavouring to extort those electrical bursts of applause—the most positive assurances of exquisite merit.

With every requisite to form a complete Actor in genteel Comedy, and with powerful interest to accelerate his advancement, Mr. LAMASH has only been regarded as an useful Actor. His father, who was French Tutor to the Duke of GLOUCESTER's children, taught him fencing, and some polite languages, as he intended him for his own profession. A natural inclination for the *beau monde*, rendered him incapable of the patient office of a teacher, and soon pointed out the Stage as a sphere better adapted to dissipation,

tion, and the display of his person, which was very handsome.

Mr. GARRICK instructed him, and brought him forward at Drury-Lane; where all thoughts of the Drama were soon obliterated by the more agreeable thoughts of the fair sex. He became an uncommon favourite with the late Mrs. BADDELEY; and was afterwards doated on by the Mistress of a Foreign Ambassador; but the lady who sacrificed most liberally to his charms, was the celebrated KATE FREDERICK, then kept by his Grace of QUEENSBURY. That lady gave him many elegant presents; often desired his Grace to wait in the next room until LAMASH was gone; and, intending to go to the Continent with him, she was arrested on Westminster Bridge, by the Duke, who was extremely fond of her.

When Mrs. FREDERICK died, he formed a connexion with Miss SMITH, the daughter of a Linen-draper, who has lived with him ever since. The extravagance he had indulged in, at the expence of his frail friends, he now found himself incapable of relinquishing or supporting. This produced numerous

duns, who forced him to fly from his engagements at Drury-Lane and the Hay-market, about fourteen years ago.

From London he went to Edinburgh, where he was well received as an Actor; but a fondness of extolling his own importance, rendered him obnoxious to those who knew him. Horses and dogs he kept, and affected to be the sportsman, the beau, and the man of fortune. The expence incurred by his follies, and a consciousness of being disliked as a private character, induced him to think of some other expedient than his own merit, or the attraction of a play, to fill the Theatre on his benefit night. He directed Mrs. LAMASH to go to Lady ELPHINGSTONE, who had great sway among the gentry, and tell a lamentable story of being daughter to an Irish Peer, but having fallen in love with her dear PHILLY, and married him, her family had entirely disowned her.—She begged pardon for the freedom she had taken, to which she could only have been forced by the want of those necessaries she had been accustomed to in her happier days—She humbly solicited their patronage; but, at the same time, requested

quested that the application might be kept secret from her husband, as he was very high spirited.

Moved by her tears, but more by the appearance of a *Noblewoman* in distress, Lady ELPHINGSTONE not only took tickets and entertained her, but gave her letters of strong recommendation to all the genteel families in Edinburgh; and as the natives of Scotland pay great veneration to Nobility, the Boxes, on his benefit night, were crowded with all the fashionable and humane people in town, but the Galleries were nearly empty.

After strolling several years, ever talking of his horses, dogs, noble kindred, &c. he was re-engaged for Drury-Lane, at the beginning of the season 1787, to perform Mr. DODD's characters, who was then dangerously indisposed; but at the commencement of the year 1790 he was again obliged to disappear, for the trifling sum of seventeen pounds, although, the day before, he had paid sixteen guineas for two miniature pictures.

His merit lies chiefly in representing *Frenchmen*, but in *Fops* or *Gentlemen*, he bawls too much to please a London audience.

MADAME

MADAME MARA,

DRURY-LANE.

IT is not, perhaps, strictly consistent with the plan of our Work to introduce this Lady, who scarcely can be denominated an English Actress. But the uncommon fame she has acquired all over Europe, and particularly in England, may justify us in availing ourselves of her having occasionally appeared on the English Stage as a Singer, for giving a slight sketch of one who has been more admired and honoured than any other vocal Performer in Europe.

She was born in Germany; and when eight years of age was brought into England by her father, a Musician. He was engaged to play at Concerts both in London and in the country; and his daughter, whose charming voice astonished, even at this early period, made her first public appearance in the orchestra

chestra at York. She continued many years in this kingdom, officiating at different Provincial Concerts, where her powers surprized all hearers; but her knowledge of music at this time was necessarily, from her youth, very trifling.

Her father was strongly advised to cultivate such amazing talents by every improvement which the science of music could produce; and sensible himself how distinguished his daughter might become in the profession, if her assiduity and ear kept pace with her natural gift of voice, he carried her to Italy and Germany, where she had the best masters, and where her progress exceeded the most sanguine expectations that could have been formed.

After she had arrived to great eminence, she continued several years in Vienna, where the Emperor of Germany paid her the greatest attention. It was here, we believe, she married Mr. MARA, who was then in the army. From Vienna she went to Berlin, where the honour done her by the Great FREDERICK, surpassed every thing that has been experienced for many centuries by any

vocal

vocal performer. She went to court in great state on all public days, and she invariably shared the royal countenance as much as any lady present. Wealth and honours were heaped upon her by every one who wished to pass for a person *du bon gout*, and she seemed possessed of all, that vanity or avarice could desire. But these were not her ruling passions, for they speedily vanished from her mind, when she discovered, that with all her splendour, she was little more than a state prisoner.

She was desirous of visiting Italy, the seat of Apollo in Europe, and made known her inclination to the King of Prussia, who was so fond of her singing, that he could not bear the thought of losing her. He used every reason and inducement in his power to detain her by fair means; but finding these ineffectual, he peremptorily declared, that he had given strict orders to prevent her from leaving his dominions, for he was resolved she should not, upon any condition, quit them. To escape, therefore, she was obliged to make use of artifice, well knowing, that if it failed, the King would not hurt her. She set out upon

upon her journey, but as she expected, was stopped; the officer, told her, "that it was by the King's own command he detained her." "But," said she, "the King has changed his mind; here is his own letter in which he has given me leave to go." She produced a letter from the Great FREDERICK, which was of a very different purport from what it was represented; but the officer knowing her influence at court, did not presume to read more than the signature. — Of its authenticity being satisfied, he concluded the contents were exactly as described, and with the greatest respect he suffered her to pass on.

She went to Italy, and was present at the Carnivale, in 1783, from whence she came straight to England. Fame had run before her, and she was received as she deserved, with the greatest delight; but, as is usual, there were others of the same profession who envied her greatness, and stirred up every evil spirit to bring her into disgrace with the public. They knew it would be vain to attack her abilities, they therefore endeavoured to picture her conduct in an odious light: she had

had never been accustomed, or even requested on the continent to sing in chorusses, and therefore she did not dream of beginning the practice here; besides, a bilious complaint rendered it detrimental, if not dangerous, for her either to exert herself too much, or to be long in one posture. While other performers were singing, and while the chorusses were going on at the grand Musical Festival in Westminster Abbey, she therefore quitted the Orchestra, and walked about the Cloisters, for the purpose of keeping her lungs in proper play. This, by her enemies, was construed into an insult to the whole audience, and even to the Royal Family, who were present; and the newspapers teemed with nothing but Madame MARA's *insolence*, in refusing to join in the chorusses at Westminster Abbey.

By this means the Public were so well primed with resentment, that it was ready to burst upon her wherever she went; and Oxford chanced to be the place which was disgraced by such malignant duplicity. At a grand Musical Festival in that city, she sat still during the first Chorus, and when she began a Solo,

a Solo, she was received with an universal hiss; upon which she walked out, and crossing the street, retired to her own lodgings; the brutality of some of the auditors even induced them to come out, and hiss her across the street; the indignation was communicated to the mob, who, without knowing the true cause, had almost laid violent hands upon her: she, however, retired to her apartments with great composure, and Miss GEORGE was called upon to sing in her stead.

A deputation of Gentlemen, after promising that she should do as she pleased, prevailed upon her to return; and she sang the airs allotted, though without an equal effect with *Orpheus*——for she did not charm the *brutes*: another Chorus occurred, and she again sat still; the cry then was universally, "Turn Madame MARA out."—Not understanding what the audience said, she smiled; this provoked them still further. The Vice-Chancellor gave notice that he would speak, and of course "no dog presumed to bark"—all was silence. With great pomp he told her, "that it was always the rule for every Vocal Performer to join in the Chorusses, and

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it was expected by the audience that she would comply." Not understanding him neither, she said to Miss GEORGE, who sat next to her——(*pointing at the Chancellor*), "Fat does dat man say?" Miss GEORGE was too much confused to answer, and Madame MARA repeated her question; until the other, guessing from the cries of the audience, that it was necessary she should explain, told her what the Vice-Chancellor had declared. "Oh!" said Madame MARA, "me does not know his rules——me vil go home."——Accordingly off she walked; nor has she ever since honoured Oxford with her musical charms

In the Spring of 1788, she first appeared on the English Stage. This arose from motives of generosity. Mr. KELLY, with whom she had been acquainted in Italy and Germany, was complaining before her of his want of influence to make a good Benefit, and she readily offered her services; but her incapability of speaking correctly the English language, seemed to render her offer useless, until the part of *Mandane*, in *Artaxerxes*, was thought of;——it being all recitative, intermixed

mixed with songs, her defective pronunciation could not so well be perceived, and her success on the first night was such, that the Manager paid her a very large sum to perform six more.

During the season of 1791-2, at the great Theatre, in the Hay-market, she again appeared in the same character; and in the Spring she came forward in the new Opera of *Dido*. Her attraction was very great in both, although she was but little assisted by the merit of the latter Piece.

Madame MARA has been heard and admired in every town of note in England: indeed, no Performer has been so universally approved throughout all Europe. She sang at several places in the country in the summer of 1791, and by this time must have realized a large fortune; for no one has had more opportunities, and, we believe, she has not dissipated the fruit of her labours. It is a doubt with many, whether Mrs. BILLINGTON or Madame MARA possess most excellence. We shall only remark, that Mrs. BILLINGTON far surpasses her in sweetness, in plaintive melody, and in delicacy of execution; but Madame

MARA

MARA has no competitor for grandeur, and in the *bravura* stile of singing. Her powers may be compared to the sublimity of MILTON's verse, which awes and charms us; and Mrs. BILLINGTON's may be compared to the captivating Pastorals of POPE, which delight by their elegance and simplicity.

Madame MARA, since the above was written, has outstept the shew of decency, which she once thought necessary. She has deserted a husband, whose attentions were ludicrously lavish, for the son of the famous flute player FLORIO. She was never loved by the Public, and is now by very few esteemed; she can feel this but one way—in the *pocket*; for Madame MARA is not a being to suspect herself of error.

Miss BARCLAY.

DRURY-LANE.

IT may be well for this young Lady, if these few lines fall in her way, and she peruses them with candour and attention. She seems already to have fallen into the error which has proved fatal to many young Theatrical Adventurers. Vanity will be an insuperable bar to her professional improvement; and at the same time will render her liable to be seduced by the flattery of those who may be tempted by her personal charms to practise her destruction. She possesses vocal powers that may prove more than useful, and captivating looks that must ever engage an audience in her favour: it is, therefore, a subject of regret among her friends to find that she already believes herself equal to MARA or BILLINGTON as a Singer, and superior to CROUCH or FARREN as a Beauty.

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By the stock from which she is sprung, however, we are induced to hope she is so strongly shielded by morality, that no common artifice or enticement will lead her from the paths of Virtue. Her father is a Clergyman, whose advancement in the Church has been so slow, that hoping to derive greater emolument by saving the *mortal* than the *spiritual* part of mankind, he invented and advertised a medicine; but from his not being an adept in the science of Quackery, rather, perhaps, than from the inefficacy of his *nostrum*, his golden hopes expired soon after he attempted to realize them; and finding the propagation of the Word of God more profitable than the circulation of his balsam, he now confines the latter to his friends, while the former he bestows on all those who will attend to it.

Miss BARCLAY's education has been attended to by her fond father with uncommon care, and more expence than easily could be afforded. Among other attainments necessary to a complish a Lady in the present age, Music is one of the most important, and in that science our young Syren was early instructed.

instructed. Her inclination naturally led her to practise in this art, more than in any other of her studies, and she acquired such a proficiency, as made her appear a phænomenon among her intimates, some of whom chancing to have theatrical connexions, mentioned the Stage as a situation in which her powers would be likely to produce her great fame and emolument; and making comparisons between those already in esteem with the Town and Miss BARCLAY, they always drew conclusions favourable to the latter. Gentlemen, in particular, could not resist the opportunity of rendering themselves agreeable to a beautiful young girl, by praising her voice, taste, and execution:—And about four years ago Mr. BARCLAY, in full confidence of his daughter's abilities, agreed that she should try them in Public.

From this moment more pains were taken in order to finish Miss BARCLAY for the Concert-room, or the Stage; and she was publicly talked of as one who had every reason for expecting to be a successful candidate. But although she was thus early announced, yet she did not make her *debut* until 1791, when

when she was brought forward at the Oratorios, in the great Theatre in the Hay-market; and having profited considerably by the instructions of that excellent master, LINDLEY, her reception was such as to give hopes to her friends, that their ideas of her merit were not unfounded. Her timidity and beauty prepossessed the audience in her favour; her powers promised to become more charming, and she was heard with a degree of partiality by all that were willing to encourage a noviciate—and in London they always compose a majority of the audience.

The mode of first introducing Miss BARCLAY to the public in the Oratorios, was well calculated to wear off the embarrassment commonly attending a first appearance in a regular drama, on the stage. It was evidently designed as such, and, no doubt, she felt the advantage of it:——but this was not the only advantage she possessed, for a part in the new Opera of *Dido* was allotted to her for her *entrée*, by which all comparison with any other performer in the same character was avoided. In May 1791 she made her first appearance on any Stage, *as a Singer and an Actress*,

Actress, and although her voice was rather weak, yet it compensated by its sweetness. Her deportment and figure were easy and genteel; she spoke, if not with energy, at least with elegance; and, upon the whole, she acquitted herself so well, that she was enrolled as a member of the Drury Lane Company.

Warned of the approaching secession of Mrs. BANNISTER, Mr COLMAN engaged Miss BARCLAY for the Summer Theatre, with a design that she should be her successor. This was an opportunity of establishing herself in a line of business which would give her a permanent footing in that House; but we are afraid that Miss BARCLAY's self-opinion and indiscretion induceed her to neglect so favourable an event; for towards the conclusion of the Season, after having appeared once or twice, and met with a good reception, she began to act in such a manner as scarcely would have been borne in Mrs. BILLINGTON;——she protested against the custom of attending Rehearsals at ten o'clock in the forenoon, as rising so early in the morning would hurt her health;——she declared

clared she could not be in the Theatre before twelve: and when Mrs. BANNISTER's parts were all sent to her, she was astonished that among others there was one of the Chorus Singers in the *Battle of Hexham*; she positively refused performing it, and Mr. COLMAN told her, that if she did not, she must quit the Theatre. We are not yet acquainted how the difference terminated; but Miss BARCLAY's friends should caution her against such imprudent conduct, as it may prove of the most serious detriment to her future success on the Stage.

We have seen the conduct above reproved, terminate in a wedding, in the bands of which the vanity that publicly offended may harmlessly sport, and even augment her felicity; since a silken curb is that with which love restrains the errors of the desire to please.

MR.

MR. WEWITZER.

DRURY-LANE.

THE London Theatres, among other advantages over those of the country, possess that of being enabled to retain a Performer for the representation of a single character. A member of a provincial corps must be capable of *turning his hand to any thing*, while those of the metropolis are kept, each man to the branch that best suits his genius. Were Mr. WEWITZER obliged to figure in Tragedy, Opera, &c. he would feel himself extremely uneasy; but confined to Frenchmen and Jews, he is perfectly at home, nor is he often required to personate other characters; for in his proper sphere he is a performer of the first class.

This gentleman is, we believe, a native of London; at least he followed the profession of a jeweller in this city, previous to his *debut*

on the stage. Many young persons of both sexes pant for theatrical laurels, but are prevented from making the attempt by the difficulty they find of being properly introduced. The road to the Drama, however, lay open to Mr. WEWITZER. His sister was on the stage, and encouraged by her example, he resolved to make a trial of his abilities.

His first appearance was as *Ralph* in *The Maid of the Mill*, for his sister's benefit in London: in that character he discovered some strokes of low comic humour, and was engaged at a small salary. But the parts which brought him most into favour with the public, were those of Frenchmen, which he pourtrayed with all the whimsical peculiarities that distinguish those volatile beings from the natives of other countries.

Whether it was from a natural extravagance, or that he had anticipated too largely on his expected emoluments, he was, at the conclusion of his first season, obliged to mount the Irish boards, to avoid *touching* scenes which otherways might have taken place between himself and two *obnoxious* Tragedians, namely, *John Doe and Richard Roe*.—

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In Dublin he was very well received, and being soon enabled to settle his affairs in London, he returned in a few months to his former engagement at Covent Garden Theatre, and continued there for many years, until a dispute took place between him and Mr. BARLOW the Treasurer, in the summer of 1789. The quarrel happened at Richmond, where Mr. WEWITZER was performing, and in the vicinity of which (Kew-Lane) Mr. BARLOW had country lodgings. What the subject of disagreement was we cannot precisely say, but the consequence of it is well known to have been Mr. WEWITZER's discharge. His antagonist's countenance depicts his temper; he is not remarkable for either flexibilityor politeness; he exercised his power with an iron hand; nor do we find that he he wishes to number *forgiveness* among his *many* virtues.

In the winter of 1789 and 1790, Mr. JOHN PALMER, being confined in the King's Bench, offered Mr. WEWITZER, then disengaged, the management of the Royalty Theatre, which was accepted. Mr. WE-

WITZER advertised in the Newspapers soliciting the communications of such Performers as were desirous of being engaged, and—almost incredible——he received letters from about seven hundred persons! —What an abundance of theatrical geniuses is this country blessed with!

Under Mr. WEWITZER's management, the Royalty Theatre was opened in the Summer 1790, with entertainments similar to those at Sadlers Wells. But the success was so indifferent, that a continuance of the undertaking was in a few months declined, and in the following summer our hero was engaged in the Drury-Lane Company, for the opening of the new House in the Hay-Market.

His loss was severely felt at Covent-Garden House, during the first winter of his absence; but Mr. BARLOW could not think of setting aside his private wrongs for the gratification of the Public.

Mr. WEWITZER generally performs in the summer at the little Theatre in the Hay-Market, where he was so fortunate as to be cast

cast for the Jew in O'KEEFE's *Young Quaker*, a part into which, although the author has thrown some strong traits of character, yet WEWITZER represented it with so much original humour as to acquire more fame by his performance than the author did by the writing.

MR. WILSON.

HERE we behold the only Low Comedian of importance in the Metropolis, who is equally successful in exciting risibility in a private company, as on the public State. It was remarked of the late Mr. EDWIN, that he could more readily set the Playhouse than the table in a roar; and we believe the same observation holds good respecting the greater number of theatrical gentlemen: — many persons mistake them when uttering the *good things* of an author, for uttering *good things* of their own, and imagine that they possess as much wit behind as before the curtain; but in this they are greatly deceived: our present subject, however, is an exception, for he is singularly distinguished by his convivial powers; his droll stories, puns, repartees, and general whim, are sure to keep the company alive and in good-humour; and not the least recom-

recommendation of his facetiousness, is, that he seldom or ever mixes it with satire or malignity.

To follow him through the various scenes which he has witnessed, and to repeat the many *bon mots* he has uttered, would make two volumes alone;—the one of vicissitude and adventure, and the other of jests that would rival JOE MILLER'S collection. We own ourselves incapable, both from a deficiency of knowledge and a want of space, to do justice to either; but as he recounts them in company with uncommon glee himself, they cannot be altogether unknown to the public.

Mr. WILSON is a native of Durham, and has received no small degree of patronage from Mr. TEMPEST, and other gentlemen of that place. His first essays on the Stage were made in the most indigent of the itinerant Companies in Scotland, and in the north of England, at a time of life when his youth might have excused any such folly, for it is considerably upwards of twenty years ago. He bore the hardships incident to such a si-

tuation with fortitude, for he was resolved to be an Actor; and he at last obtained an engagement in the Theatre Royal Edinburgh, where his abilities as a Low Comedian rendered him a great favourite, and ensured him a permanent settlement in that corps. He remained there many seasons, until the death of the celebrated SHUTER, whom he resembles in his acting, induced the Managers of Covent-Garden House to bring him to London, for the purpose of supplying the place of that regretted son of the Sock.

His public *entrée* in the Metropolis was undistinguished by uncommon admiration, yet he had reason to be pleased with the kindness of his reception. He, however, was so fortunate as to have the part of *Don Jerome* in the *Duenna* assigned to him soon after his first attempt in this city: as he was the first who represented that entertaining character, as he represented it in a most characteristic and successful manner, and as the Piece had an astonishing *run*, it completely established him as a Performer of merit, in the opinion of the Town; and from that time the principal

pal Comic *Old Men* in all Plays were allotted to him, as being the chief person in that line, and he retained quiet possession of it for several years.

Partly by his own imprudence, but more by the villainy of some Attornies, to whom he entrusted the management of his affairs, he became so involved in debt, that lest *John Doe* and *Richard Roe* should insist upon him acting the *Prison Scene*, he made his *exit* from London. A compromise soon after took place, and he returned; but still the infamy of some Gentlemen in the Law baffled all the attempts he made to extricate himself; and as the most remarkable instance of this fact, we will relate the following, which cannot be disputed, as it happened before about a thousand persons, and in itself forms a singular occurrence in Theatrical History.

In the year 1784, Mr. HARRIS, Proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre, advanced Mr. WILSON a large sum of money, to pay a part of his debts, and the remainder were to be put in a train of liquidation. Mr. WILSON could not go round to his creditors himself, without being liable to an arrest; he there-

fore, as is usual upon these occasions, employed an Attorney, and lodged four or five hundred pounds in his hands, to enable him to accomplish the business. This Gentleman did continue to obtain *time* from the creditors, and made Mr. WILSON believe that the business was going on as well as could be wished. Instead, however, of paying the money confided to his care, he, without the knowledge of his client, put in Jew bail to several actions then depending, and gave Mr. WILSON to understand he had paid the debts——but he soon decamped with the whole money in his pocket. The principal of those obliging Israelites now came upon Mr. WILSON, and published hand-bills, which were distributed at the doors of the Theatre, accusing him with running away from his bail. These proving ineffectual, the person, whose name was SANGUINETTI, one evening, during the performance of *Gretna Green*, at the Summer Theatre, leaped from the King's Box upon the Stage, and clapping a pistol to Mr. WILSON's breast, conducted him behind the scenes.

The consternation of the audience, and the confusion of the other Performers, may easily

sily be conceived. Moses was kicked from behind the scenes out at the Stage-door; and Mr. Wilson at last come forward, and explained the whole to the House, much to their satisfaction, nor did he ever receive more applause. He stated, that he could not consider himself responsible to the Jew, as he never had solicited him, or even known, till of late, that he had become his bail; and that so far from imagining those actions were bailed, he thought they were entirely discharged, as he had given money for that purpose.

By the agency of this *worthy Lawyer*, whose name was Turner, it was now put out of Mr. Wilson's power to satisfy his creditors, and he was obliged to make a second *exit*. He went to Scotland, and immediately became an extraordinary favourite; but upon Mr. Edwin's death, he was again recalled to the metropolis, where he renewed the good opinion of the Town; but after one season, he was obliged to quit it. He has been a man of gallantry in his time. Miss Adcock, the late celebrated Mrs. Wilson, lived with him many years; but he has now, we suppose, bidden adieu to such amours, for about

four years ago he married a daughter of Mr. LEE LEWES, with whom, it is said, he is contented in the matrimonial state.

No Actor possesses more rich broad humour than Mr. WILSON; his portrait of an ignorant, rich, obstinate, guzzling Citizen, is equal to any thing on the Stage, and is finely exemplified in *Alderman Gobble*, in *The Lord Mayor's Day*, or *Sir John Bull*, in *Fontainbleau*.—In ludicrous *Old Men*, none at present can be compared to him, if we except QUICK.

MISS

MISS DECAMP.

DRURY-LANE.

THE juvenile appearance of this Lady may almost render us liable to censure, for classing her among the Actresses. But childish as she appears, she is not so green either in age or abilities, as at first view we might be inclined to imagine. She has reached her twenty-second year, yet looks many years younger, and her merit has already been so liberally subscribed to, that the most approved veteran may envy her success.

In the Memoirs of this little Heroine there is nothing curious or interesting. Her whole life has been confined to the Theatre; and hitherto she has not made a very important figure, although her exertions for the two last seasons have begot much expectation. When so young, that she might have been thought scarcely able to walk, she was engaged

gaged in the Drury-Lane Company as a Dancer, and in that capacity acquitted herself with great credit;—indeed her *petite* figure was perfectly calculated for the train of *Queen Mab*. But she soon acquired a knowledge that there were more substantial sweets to be gained under the auspices of *Thalia* than in the fairy train, and therefore, she was emulous of attempting to *speak* as well as to *move*. Accordingly we find her in many little parts, which require a child to represent them; and particularly in *Richard Cœur de Lion*, she attracted no inconsiderable share of applause.

During several seasons she occasionally stepped from her official situation of "the merry dance" into that of Actress and Singer; but the Summer of 1792, in particular, elevated her much above what she could have so *suddenly* expected. When the *Beggar's Opera* was reversed, and Mr. BANNISTER, senior, and Mr. JOHNSTONE, performed *Polly* and *Lucy*, Miss DE CAMP personated the gay *Captain Macheath*, in which she sung the airs with so much taste and feeling, and acted with so much appropriate animation, that she

she received the most flattering applause, and was encored in several of the Songs. Other opportunities occurred, which enabled her to prove, that it was not in one part alone that she could shine with advantage: Mrs. BLAND being confined in child bed, Miss DE CAMP was appointed her substitute, and in all the characters she sustained, particularly *Madelon*, in the *Surrender of Calais*, she was only inferior to the original; but even that inferiority was of no great extent.

This young Lady is also a most excellent mimic, which, together with her proficiency in dancing, has greatly recommended her to the notice of many ladies of distinction. On the morning after her performance of *Captain Macheath*, crouds of her friends in carriages came to congratulate her; and if she is brought as forward in Drury Lane as she has been at the Summer Theatre in the Haymarket, she will soon rank high among the favourites of the town.

MR. MUNDEN.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THERE are some men who step at once to the utmost eminence to which their abilities can possibly raise them; who having a good portion of shrewdness and judgment, without a spark of genius, collect from observation, and acquire by study, a tolerable degree of merit; who arrive at their *ne plus ultra* at a time when others have not unfolded the powers of their mind; who surprise at first, yet sink in esteem as expectation is disappointed of improvement. Mr. MUNDEN comes very near to this description; for if we except the part he performs in *The Road to Ruin*, he has remained stationary in the public opinion, since his first appearance in London.

Mr. MUNDEN followed the profession of a poulterer with his father, for some years, in

in Brookes's Market; but contracting a *penchant* for the Drama, his first effort in that line was with an itinerant company in the neighbourhood of the metropolis.

But his first attempts either met not with due encouragement, or did not deserve any, for as a child of THESPIS, no star befriended him, excepting his unconquerable hopes. During several years, he suffered all the penury that ambition could inflict; in proof of which, from among many others, we select one instance. About fifteen years ago, after being *Alexander the Great*, *Julius Cæsar*, and the tyrant *Richard*, at Canterbury, Mr. SWORDS, formerly of the Summer Theatre, in the Hay-Market, and Mr. MUNDEN, were obliged to take their passage from that city to London in a cart; and in the course of their journey, the former actually exclaimed, "Tap my eyes!—when you are at Covent-Garden, and I at Drury-Lane,—for you know we will be too eminent to be both retained by one house—what will the Theatrical Biographers say, when they hear that the great BILLY SWORDS, and the great JOE MUNDEN, rode from Canterbury to London in a *cart*?

While

While in the southern parts of the kingdom, Mr. MUNDEN had little reason to be delighted with his new profession; it was the North which cherished and brought forward his abilities. The encouragement he received in Newcastle upon Tyne, was of the most gratifying nature, for he soon became there the most favourite Comedian—the EDWIN of the Company; and in that Corps, which is not the least respectable in England, his great talents were considered to be rewarded with a singular liberality, when he was allowed a settled salary of fifteen shillings per week. It is, however, necessary to be known, that in companies of such a complexion, salary is but a secondary object. Mr. MUNDEN at that time, by Benefits annually in Chester, Whitehaven, Newcastle, &c. made his income amount to nearly the same sum it does at present, and in a few years, having laid by a large fortune—for a strolling player—he purchased a share in the company, which had been in possession of Mr. AUSTIN.

He had long been an unrivalled favourite in the Provincial Theatres where he performed, and for several years he had been a Manager;

nager; when the death of Mr. EDWIN, in the Autumn of 1790, obliged the proprietors of Covent-Garden Theatre to ransack the country for a substitute. Mr. MUNDEN's reputation having been made known to Mr. CONST, (proprietor of a large share in Covent-Garden Theatre) at his request he was engaged by Mr. HARRIS, very soon after the death of EDWIN. He appeared in a variety of characters, such as *Jemmy Jumps*, *Sir Francis Gripe*, &c. &c. and was warmly received in them all:——indeed some people went so far as to assert, that he at least equalled, if he did not excel EDWIN; and the buz of approbation, which was general, led those who cannot, or who dare not think for themselves, and who are always very numerous in a Theatre, to believe that the *Sock* had suffered no diminution of entertainment by the change.

But although Mr. MUNDEN's abilities are certainly entitled to commendation, yet great was the falling off between him and EDWIN; and after the never-failing passion for variety had subsided, the Town became perfectly sensible of the full extent of our Hero's talents.

talents. He retired to that place in the public estimation which he now holds, and was looked on as a good Low Comedian, although destitute of extraordinary genius, or of extraordinary powers in exciting risibility.

Mr. MUNDEN's acting never appears natural: he is always acting, and by too much anxiety to please, he never allows the audience to forget that they are in a Theatre. In *Sheepsface*, *Mawworm*, or *Darby*, EDWIN delighted most when he seemed to labour at it least; his simplicity equalled every idea that could be formed of such characters by the most lively imagination; but there is a monotony in Mr. MUNDEN's voice, an invariable dry sameness in his manner, and an excess of acting, with an apparent confidence in his success, which must for ever preclude him from attaining the summit of reputation as a Low Comedian.

MRS MOUNTAIN.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THIS Lady, from her infancy, has been taught to revere the Stage as the most honourable and agreeable of all professions. Born to a public life, and that rather of a contemptible kind, she must now find herself extremely happy in being on a respectable footing in a Royal Theatre.

She is younger sister to Mr. WILKINSON, the famous *wire dancer*, who, we believe, is very well known all over the three kingdoms.

In her infancy there was no prospect of any provision for her, excepting what she could procure by her talents as a public Performer; and as her relations were not in such circumstances as to enable them to perfect her in those accomplishments necessary for an Actress, she was glad to article herself as an apprentice at the Royal Circus, having previously experienced great indigence.

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In this situation her beauty attracted the attention of the Proprietors of that place, and her vocal abilities and appearance, the approbation of the auditors. She was rather negligent in her person, but still she was distinguished from her young sisterhood, and generally a favourite. When the term of her articles expired, ambitious of a more elevated station, she obtained permission to perform a few nights at the Hay-Market Theatre, but her ill success obliged her to apply for an engagement with Mr. WILKINSON, Manager of the York Company, whom, it should be observed, is no relation to our heroine.

Placed in a Theatre-Royal, and engaged in regular Dramas, she applied to the study of the profession, not only with assiduity, but delight. She had some vivacity, which, decorated by her beauty, and considerable merit as a Singer, rendered her an uncommon favourite in Yorkshire :——she performed in almost every line of acting; and as she generally acquitted herself tolerably, the country folks were so blinded by her pretty looks, that

that they gave her the name of a charming and very general Player.

After serving a few seasons under Mr. WILKINSON, her fame had acquired such strength as to reach London; and Mr. HARRIS, who catches even at the shadow of merit, engaged her for Covent-Garden. Previous to her *debut*, which was in the end of the year 1786, the newspapers teemed with panegyrics on her abilities; she was said to unite the abilities of Mrs. JORDAN and Mrs. BILLINGTON, and even to excel both; but those *Puffs* only tended to lessen her in the public opinion, when she actually came forward.

The musical, the serious, and the comic lines, she tried, but with little success; and towards the conclusion of the season she dropped into her proper sphere, that of a second Singer. About the same time too, the heart of Mr. MOUNTAIN, a Musician belonging to the Band, beat so much in harmony with her own, that previous to the shutting of the Theatre for the season, they were by holy wedlock made one.

Owing to some dispute about her salary she

she was, at the conclusion of 1791, discharged. The misunderstanding arose from Mrs. MOUNTAIN demanding her salary while in childbed; but, on the score of her incapacity for duty, it was refused.—She soon after made her peace with Mr. HARRIS, and renewed her situation.

As a Performer Mrs. MOUNTAIN can only be considered useful; she has a pretty voice, and a pretty manner of singing; and, what is perhaps a still greater recommendation, she has a very pretty face. In Operas her manner is simple and agreeable, and for the department she filled we know none better calculated.

MR. MARSHALL,

COVENT-GARDEN.

IT frequently occurs that a Player, by personating one character with more than common ability, obtains a general fame much above what his general talents deserve; but particularly if he happens to introduce himself in so favourable a situation, the public make generous allowances for what he may afterwards fail in, and will not be disgusted with him in any part, because in one he has given them extraordinary satisfaction. Mr. MARSHALL was very fortunate in his *debut*. He made a character highly entertaining which before had been regarded with a slight approbation; and instead of being looked on with indifference in other parts which he supported indifferently, the audience gave him a certain degree of credit for all he did, because he was the *celebrated Bagatelle*.

Mr. MARSHALL is a native of London. His father was a reputable Master Taylor, in Crown-court, Russel-street, and he was bred to the same business. In such a situation, placed immediately between the two Winter Theatres, employed by the Performers, and almost every house in the neighbourhood occupied by them, we cannot be surprised if Mr. MARSHALL, while a youth, felt a propensity for a profession so amply calculated to captivate those who are not arrived at a time of life when reason and prudence can triumph over vanity and ambition. He daily beheld the Players rioting in dissipation, yet courted and applauded by the Town; and anxious to adopt a line of life which seemed to abound with pleasure and praise, and for which, by a tolerable voice and taste for Music, he believed himself qualified, we need not wonder at finding him treading the boards at the Little Theatre in the Hay-Market, where he met with so much applause in a piece called the *Silver Tankard*, that although his wishes might not be gratified by finding himself a public idol, yet his hopes were so far fulfilled that he resolved on prosecuting

secuting the Stage; and in order to obtain by art, what nature had not given, he joined some Provincial corps, where practice, he concluded, might supply the want of genius.

Whether from a sympathy arising from a similarity of inclination, or from any other cause, he about this time became acquainted with a young Lady of considerable musical powers. Their vocal warblings begot such a mutual flame, that they bound themselves by holy ties to perform the *duet* of life together. But Mrs. MARSHALL could not long confine herself to the *rules* prescribed for the matrimonial state, she resolved to practise in *ad libitum* as often as it pleased her; *discord* now succeeded *harmony*, and the *chords* of affection, prudence, and even decency, being broken, Mr. MARSHALL, whom we do not find was blameable, determined to be *solo*. Mr. and Mrs. MARSHALL separated, and the latter afterwards performed with reputation as a Singer in all the principal towns in the North of this Island, indulging herself with every object who pleased her fancy, until a *finale* was put to her life by Death, that grim tyrant.

She died about five years ago, near Newcastle upon Tyne.

After the matrimonial establishment was dissolved, Mr. MARSHALL continued on the Stage, but in different companies from those where his wife was engaged. In Manchester, Birmingham, York, &c. he performed with considerable *eclat*. His cast of parts lay chiefly in Opera and genteel Comedy; he was looked upon as the first Vocal Performer, and was well received in what are called the fine Gentlemen: but the character which procured his engagement in London was *Bagatelle*, in the *Poor Soldier*. From a slight knowledge of the French language, together with some observation on their manners, he was enabled to personate the *French Valet* with more than common success. But what added most to his fame, was his introducing a Song, written for that part by Mr. CHARLES MURRAY, of the Bath Theatre. Although Mr. MURRAY had composed the Song for himself, and had obtained great applause in it, yet it proved more beneficial to Mr. MARSHALL, who, from his knowledge of Music, and practice as a Vocal Performer, was

was enabled to sing it better than the author.

Upon Mr. WEWITZER's being appointed Manager of the Royalty Theatre, the Managers of Covent-Garden House naturally cast their thoughts on Mr. MARSHALL, as the most capable of succeeding him in the French Characters. He was accordingly engaged, and made his first appearance as *Bagatelle*, towards the conclusion of the year 1790. His success in that part was very great; he was constantly encored in Mr. MURRAY's Song, and became an established favourite with the Town.

Mr. MARSHALL's reputation, and principal line of acting, however were not of such importance as to prevail on the Managers to keep him in his own proper walk: he was obliged occasionally to be a pack-horse, and to come forth as the *Man of Wax* in *Romeo and Juliet*, and other characters of equal consequence, which he sustained with credit to the Theatre: nor are his Vocal Powers totally uncalled for. Indeed he renders himself useful in many other characters, besides those in which he can acquire fame.

There is one part of this gentleman's cha-

racter which we consider it to be peculiarly our duty to add, and that is, that his character in private life is a good one. This is a recommendation, which, for the honour of the Stage, we shall always be ready to make known, and to Gentlemen in Mr. MARSHALL's sphere, it is no inconsiderable one; for the Managers will certainly always attend to private character, where they can, however they may wink at the infamy of those whose great talents and favour with the public supersede all other enquiries.

Mrs. BERNARD.

COVENT-GARDEN.

IT should be the most pleasing part of biographical employment, to place the merits of Characters in that point of view, which reflects the justest light on their actions. Under the influence of the propriety of this measure, we are happy in having found, in these degenerate days, even in a Theatre, a Matrimonial fair-one whose public conduct demands encouragement, whose private inculcates the lesson of example. In the various companies she has been a Member of, we have never heard that the slightest impropriety was laid to her charge.

The family or the place of nativity of this lady we cannot exactly ascertain. As Miss ROBERTS, she for some time sustained the station of heroine in several country Companies, and was in the Norwich Corps when Mr. BERNARD was smitten with her charms.

Being both young adventurers, a sympathy of situation produced a fondness, which was not a little heightened by the circumstances of their being the greatest public favourites in the Company, she in Tragedy and Comedy, and Mr. BERNARD in Opera. They passed a short time in sounding each other's inclinations, which on finding mutually inclined for matrimony, they entered into that holy state.

From Norwich Mrs. BERNARD went to the West of England, where she acquired great celebrity as a Tragedian. Mr. PALMER, the Bath Manager, heard of her merit, and went to Weymouth purposely to see her:—he requested that she might perform two or three principal characters, and was so much pleased with her exertions, that he offered her her own terms; but her engagement not being expired, she was under the necessity of delaying a definitive settlement for several months.

Her husband was likewise engaged for Bath, though principally on her account. With the gay refined auditors of that city, she instantly became a favourite, particularly in

in Tragedy; and great as the disparity now appears, she was the actual successor of Mrs. SIDDONS; a circumstance that probably induced her to fix on *Lady Randolph* for her *debut* to a London Audience in 1787: but a little reflection convinced her of the impropriety of such a step; and though her name was announced at the bottom of the playbills for *Douglas's Mother*, yet she afterwards thought it more prudent to come forward as *Mrs. Sullen*, in the *Beaux Stratagem*.

Mr. BERNARD performed *Archer* on the same evening, and though neither of them astonished the town with rare powers, yet both were approved of as respectable Comedians. Mr. BERNARD held a tolerable rank in the Theatre, to which indeed his abilities entitled him; but from some strange perversion of talents, his wife was excluded from almost every part in which she might display her merit. With qualifications that might enable her to rank above mediocrity, she was made merely useful, and parts the most opposite to her talents she was obliged to represent; yet even in personating such trifling Characters as *Charlotte* in *Love-a-la-Mode*,

and *Amelia* in *Othello*, she convinced the Public of her claims to favour, and obtained considerable applause.

MR.

Mr BENSON.

DRURY-LANE.

FROM the family connection which this Gentleman has formed, he has much more influence behind than before the curtain:—we do not mean that he is countenanced or encouraged more than he deserves; but it is certain that he would not be put so forward, were it not for his alliance with the great and powerful House of KEMBLE. Some years ago he married the sister of Mrs. STEPHEN KEMBLE, late Miss SATCHELL; a Lady who bestows more happiness by her domestic endearments, than by her personal beauties; and however distantly he may be related to his *active* Sovereign, yet his consanguinity is not overlooked, nor his industry unrewarded.

However gratifying applause may be, yet there are other passions far more powerful than *Vanity*. Our present subject, no doubt,

was highly elated with the encomiums bestowed upon his exertions in Windsor, and other towns in the vicinity of the Metropolis. In the late Mr. EDWIN'S, or in the present Mr. JOHN PHILIP KEMBLE'S characters, he was there received with more than common approbation: but a thorough knowledge, that twenty-five shillings per week, as a servant, was better than eight or nine shillings per week as a Hero, made him use all his interest to obtain an engagement in London, —round which he had been hovering in that expectation a considerable time. His wishes were a few years ago completed, and by his assiduity he soon found himself established in the Drury-Lane Company at thirty shillings per week.

As a man of business, Mr. BENSON is extremely useful; yet in any other light, we apprehend, he never will be considered. He is sober and industrious, and avoids the dissipation too incident to his brethren. When on an emergency some one is wanted to perform a particular character, he is always ready, and having a very quick study, he generally acquits himself with tolerable success. Indeed,

deed, that one quality of personating parts at a short notice would indisputably bring him very forward, were it not that his person and manner are not formed to support a regular line of genteel acting, and from these we are inclined to think he will never be raised much higher than his present station. Yet even as a ready and tolerable substitute for others he is of great importance to any Theatre :—Of this the Proprietors of Drury-Lane are so sensible, that about three years ago they doubled his salary, from thirty shillings to three pounds.

MRS. BOOTH.

DRURY-LANE.

THE unimportance of this Lady's professional situation requires that she should occupy but a small space of this work.

Mrs. BOOTH is wife to the Taylor of Drury-Lane Theatre. Her cast of parts is confined wholly to Old Women, excepting where she occasionally assists in a Chorus, a Mob, &c. But in the Old Women she is not the principal, for she only personates such as are thought unworthy the talents of Mrs. HOPKINS. Mrs. BOOTH has been considerably advanced since the retirement of Mrs. LOVE; but we are strongly inclined to think that it is rather for the sake of the salary that she continues on the Stage, than any idea of fame; yet we would not wish to be understood to insinuate that she is incapable of sustaining the list of parts allotted to her.

MR.

MR. BLANCHARD.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THIS Gentleman is more extraordinary in his *private* character, than in his *public* capacity; although his merit as an Actor entitles him to no inconsiderable share of commendation. Born and bred in a Theatre, where vice seldom receives a check, and where the fallibility of human nature is almost suffered without reproach to deviate from the paths of rectitude, he has evinced sentiments that would honour a Divine, and in him we see an instance of the possibility, that virtue may be nursed *even in the Green Room.*

The parents of Mr. BLANCHARD were many years ago employed in Drury-Lane Theatre, where their pecuniary emoluments were too small to enable them to educate their son for any better profession than their own. He was accordingly taught dancing, and

and occasionally performed little parts, particularly *Prince Arthur* to GARRICK's *King John*, which obtained the praise of the immortal *Roscius*; and in *Harliquin's Invasion*, where he discovered some infantine abilities.

As he advanced to maturity, he perceived that his talents were not likely to be called into action, in a place where only the most refined merit meets encouragement; he therefore very judiciously determined, for the sake of practice, to enter into a country Company, and by that means accomplish himself for the nicer taste of a London audience.

At Plymouth and Exeter he found parts adapted to his talents, and became such a favourite of the Bath Managers, who are ever culling the choicest theatrical flowers in the West, that they engaged him. Here he found himself very happy; his unaffected simplicity, and native humour on the Stage, his affability and laudable conduct off it, rendering him at once an esteemed and respectable Actor. He also distinguished himself as a Hornpipe dancer.

There is a pleasing smile on his countenance, much more alluring *on* than *off* the Stage,

Stage, which is said to have made a warm impression on the heart of a young lady, then at a Boarding School in Bath, whose relations were not only people of fortune, but title. The wounded fair one found means to obtain an interview, and by indirect hints sufficiently expressed her passion; but whether Mr. BLANCHARD's affections were already engaged, or that he acted as the most rigid honour dictated, it is certain, that he thanked the young lady for her good opinion, but declined the flattering offer. The lady, who was very young, and whose name for obvious reasons we conceal, never afterwards communed with him.

Though Mr. BLANCHARD declined this alliance, he was by no means prejudiced against Matrimony. The charms of Miss WEWITZER induced him to promise her marriage; yet he soon after gave his hand to Miss WRIGHT, formerly of Drury-Lane Theatre, who it seems had suddenly rivetted his affections. This young lady had an amiable character, and a genteel salary as a singer, in the Bath Company, the latter of which her relations did not scruple to say was the ob-

ject

ject of our Hero's affection; but this illiberal assertion did not cool the mutual flame of the young couple; and to shew her parents the *disinterestedness* of his passion, he withdrew her from the Stage, soon after their marriage.

Mr. BLANCHARD had many offers from London, but refused them, until such liberal terms might be obtained as would enable him to keep his wife and an aged parent with comfort; and a salary adequate to his wishes was given him about the end of 1787.

It might reasonably have been imagined, that one who passed all his life on the Stage, would not be terrified at the thoughts of appearing before a London audience:——the reverse was, however, the case with Mr. BLANCHARD. For a week previous to his *debut*, he was in the greatest agitation of mind, and could rest neither night nor day. His fears communicating to his wife, whose nerves were of a more delicate texture, are said to have worked so much upon her feelings, that she actually became insane for a considerable time; a circumstance which, it may be supposed, contributed not a little to his own perturbation.

About

About the month of October he made his *entrée* as *Hodge* in *Love in a Village*; and performed *Sharp*, in the *Lying Valet*, in the Farce. His merit was so obvious that he received very flattering applause; and by his excellence in various other characters, particularly the *Plough Boy*, in the *Farmer*, he has improved on the public opinion, and is now a great favourite.

There is an arch slyness in his countenance, mixed with seeming good-nature, which is peculiarly his own, and is extremely appropriate to several parts that he performs. He is likewise unrivalled in pourtraying rural simplicity, which is his true *forte*, although he sometimes appears in foppish characters. His person is rather short and thick, but not disagreeably so; and as the current of popular opinion is in his favour, he will probably rise to considerable professional eminence.

MR.

MR. MOSS.

THIS Gentleman is a native of Ireland, and was born in Capel street, Dublin. At an early period he was sent over by his friends to England, and was there engaged in an active profession. A strong inclination for the Stage, which, no doubt, he imbibed from visiting the London Theatres, prevailed over his engagements in business; for, like an unthinking youth, he precipitately relinquished his occupation, and joined a company of Performers at Enfield in Essex.

His success at his first outset was by no means proportioned to his ardour: prejudiced against him on account of his youth and inexperience, the Manager would not permit him to perform, notwithstanding his repeated solicitations. He dreaded returning to his friends, whom he had offended by his elopement; and no resource being left but that of per-

perseverance, he travelled further into the country, and there joined an *itinerant* troop. Since that time he has invariably devoted his labours to the service of the *Comic Muse.*

Mr. Moss is, we believe, known, and has distinguished himself as a Comedian in most of the Companies in Britain and Ireland. In Edinburgh he is one of the most favourite Performers: nor is he less esteemed as a man, than in his professional character as an Actor.

Mr. MACKLIN, a few years ago, recommended him to the Dublin Stage, where we believe he now is, and where his talents pleased so much in his inimitable performance of the *Miser* that the Managers were induced to repeat that Play thirteen nights successively! He also performed with no less success in Corke and other parts of Ireland.

Such was now the celebrity of his professional abilities, that the Managers of Drury-Lane would have brought him forward as a substitute for Mr. PARSONS, had he not deemed the terms inadequate, and therefore declined the engagement. The approbation which

which he met with the following season at the Hay-Market Theatre, induced the Managers of Drury-Lane to treat, and he was actually engaged for that situation: but under the management of Mr. KEMBLE he was so much kept back from the Public, on account of some reasons unknown to us, that he was compelled, with becoming spirit, to solicit his discharge, which, by the interference of a friend, was, with some difficulty obtained, in the spring of 1789.

He then returned to Edinburgh, where he was received with no small satisfaction by his friends and the Public. In the summer season he continued not only a very useful, but a favourite Performer at the Hay-Market, until he was superseded by Mr. WILSON.

He has confined his study entirely to Comedy; and though deserving of commendation in most of the characters he attempts, yet he certainly appears to most advantage in the parts of *Old Men*, which evidently appear to be his *forte* ——His figure, voice, and manner, present us exactly with the idea

idea of age; and we cannot help exclaiming,

" This is not he whom fiction drew;
" For Nature owns the likeness true."

In the example of Mr. Moss is seen the effects of an early inclination for the Stage, supported by perseverance, and improved by attention and experience.

MRS.

MRS LEE,

COVENT-GARDEN,

WHO lately (1795) made her appearance in the new Comedy of *Life's Vagaries*, is the wife of Mr. LEE, Manager of the Salisbury Theatre, and Author of several Fugitive Pieces of Poetry, &c. She is the second daughter of Mr. SIMON KEYS, who was some years on the Stage, but who now resides at Ringwood in Hampshire.

About three years ago, Mrs. LEE's father observing that she retained a partiality, which she had early imbibed for the Stage, engaged her with Messrs. THETFORD and LEE, the Managers of the Salisbury Company. It was at this time her acquaintance with Mr. LEE commenced, and in the summer of 1793 they were married. The applause which was bestowed on her performances at Salisbury, Devizes, Lymington, Wells,

Wells, &c. having reached the ear of Mr. HARRIS, he proposed terms, and in consequence Mr. and Mrs. LEE were immediately engaged.

This Lady's *forte* is evidently the *sprightly romping girls*. Her *breeches* figure too is unquestionably good, as was witnessed by her performance of MOGGY, in the *Highland Reel*; and in the *Blunders at Brighton*.

From these requisites she has been mistakenly reported a servile imitator of Mrs. JORDAN; but we are assured that she never saw that favourite Actress perform, till some time after her arrival in London this season.

The private character of Mrs. LEE is undeniably well spoken of.

We shall conclude this short sketch with the following lines, which were written on seeing Mrs. LEE perform in the new Farce of *the Blunders at Brighton*.

This morn as I lay between sleeping and waking,
Young *Cupid* approach'd me—'twas he past mistaking:
The wicked young rogue, tho' the *Graces* were next him,
Was as naked as Nature and Bards have exprest him!

" What, *Cupid!* (said I) still as *usual*, I see!
" Why, I'd heard you'd got *Breeches!*" said he, " look at LEE!
" I have lent mine to her; mark how well she does bear them!
" For *my* part (he cried) I'm asham'd *now* to wear them!"
I look'd, and admir'd, said her charms none could doubt 'em,
But for *Breeches!* O Cupid! give *me* her *without* 'em!

MR. W. BOWDEN.

COVENT-GARDEN.

IT frequently happens, that vocal abilities in a man are as highly flattered as beauty in a woman, when perhaps both are short of mediocrity. It as frequently happens, that by such flattery the minds of both are diverted from pursuits more useful to the community, and, in many cases, more productive of emolument to themselves.—Add to this, that the glare, tinsel, and seeming ease of a theatrical life, and the high salaries which first-rate abilities acquire (for what noviciate, in his own opinion, is less?) are strong inducements to quit the slow-paced progress of mechanical industry.

Whether either of these ideas applies to the subject of the present brief sketch, we shall not take upon us to pronounce: but at an

early age, while an apprentice to the Cotton manufactory, at Manchester, (his native town) he was frequently complimented on his voice and taste for music.—This led him into company, and made him acquainted with some of the first professional musical men who frequented that place.—After having served out his apprenticeship, and made trial for some time of business on his own account, and not meeting with that success which he expected, he was strongly urged by his musical friends to attempt the Stage as a better expedient. This advice corresponding with his early inclinations, he resolved on coming to the metropolis at once; and in 1787, he was engaged by Mr. HARRIS, who was then much in want of a deep tenor singer, for three years, but from a misunderstanding, he continued there only one year.

Mr. BOWDEN afterwards pursued his profession at Dublin, Edinburgh, and other principal towns in this kingdom. In 1794, he renewed his engagement at Covent Garden Theatre, where we now find him, improved by his practice in the country.

Mr. BOWDEN is a firm and manly singer, possessing

possessing a bass voice of considerable compass and melody. His figure is well enough, but his face incapacitates him for a Lover, and Opera has little better to offer him in its present state. He is not at all related to Mr. BOADEN, the Author of *Fontainville Forest*, whose family is from the West of England.

MISS WALLIS.

COVENT-GARDEN.

THAT chance frequently concurs with design in the production of our best hopes, is a truth that few will deny, when they have considered the fortune of Miss WALLIS. Her patronage has been so fortuitous, that it looks like an interposition of an higher power—for human vanity could never lift even the fancy of her parents into the imagination that she should attract the notice and receive the favours of the Chancellor of Great-Britain.

Miss WALLIS was born at Richmond in Yorkshire, on the 11th of Jan. 1774. Her father is the son of a respectable Clergyman in the North of Ireland. She was born to be an Actress, for such was the condition of her parents. In Ireland she performed, when very young,

young, such characters as youth is competent to fill, and applause never intoxicated her for a moment. At length the vicissitudes of a dramatic life led her parents back again into England, and when just turned of eleven years of age, she was first seen performing in a barn by Lord and Lady LOUGHBOROUGH.

The warmth with which they espoused her does infinite honour to their feelings and her own merits.—Her Ladyship treated her as a daughter, and all that maternal care and the first tutors could do, was done to render the young protegée worthy of her patron. It seemed as if Providence had bountifully provided against a future loss by this striking event, for soon after the adoption she lost her mother—a woman of strong natural powers, and whose life did honour to the profession. To a disconsolate husband she left the care of eight children, of whom our heroine was the eldest.

Miss WALLIS has great sensibility. It has therefore frequently happened, that the expectation she has raised by rehearsal, has been frustrated by performance—her efforts are not under her absolute command. At Covent Garden

Garden Theatre she played, when she was fifteen—She chose *Sigismunda*; but her fears destroyed her powers, and the following winter she went to Bath and Bristol, where she was generally admired.—Two summers afterwards she played at Weymouth before their Majesties and the Princesses, who particularly applauded her talents, during the few nights she was engaged.

It was at Bath Mr. HARRIS saw her, and his offers of engagement were liberal, and probably unexampled. Mr. PALMER generously allowed her to go to London, where her talents would acquire so extended a field for their exertion; and with effects attendant, highly honourable to the Actress, she delivered at Bath her Farewell Address—a copy of which we present to our Readers.

" When the heart is overflowing with gra-
" titude, there is little need of studied pe-
" riods, or harmonious numbers, the plain
" and simple voice of truth is sufficient: for,
" as the mighty Master of the Stage so forci-
" bly expresses it," " NATURE IS ABOVE
" ART." " Condescend then to hear her
" honest

" honest dictates, proceeding from a breast
" that has been so often cheared by your
" plaudits, and strengthened by your pro-
" tection.

" I am now to say, that the time ap-
" proaches when I must leave, perhaps for
" ever, this beloved place; this place where
" my youthful efforts to please have been so
" long and so kindly encouraged; where my
" faults have been pardoned, and my humble
" merits greatly indeed over-rated; your ap-
" probation has raised me into notice, your
" voice stamped a value on my name. Is it
" just then, that I should leave you at the
" very moment when your generosity has
" lifted me from the ground? That, on the
" instant when your fostering care has given
" me strength to fly; the first effort of my
" yet feeble wings should be to fly from
" you? My answer, my only answer is, the
" strongest of all human ties, THE DUTY I
" OWE MY FAMILY COMPELS ME HENCE.

" I have a precedent before me in that
" *great Actress* who is the *Pride* and *Ornament*
" of the British Stage; who, actuated by
" similar motives, withdrew from your pro-
" tection,

" tection, but not from your good wishes.
" Before she went to London, on the very
" boards where I now stand, she produced
" three most affecting reasons for quitting
" Bath. I may never have a hundredth part
" of her merit, but in this at least I could
" easily imitate her. She had three children,
" —I have seven brothers and sisters, whose
" prospects in life, as yet, depend entirely
" on mine. What is there that I would not
" attempt to serve them? There were eight
" of us left, when I, the eldest, was not
" twelve years old; our mother (our chief
" support) died in giving birth to the young-
" est of us; but that Merciful Being, who
" TEMPERS THE WIND TO THE SHORN
" LAMB, raised us up friends; such friends,
" as, before us, I think, no poor family was
" ever blessed with:—What do I not owe
" them? And, since I came amongst you,
" what kindnesses have I not experienced?
" Your patronage, joined to that of the ge-
" nerous inhabitants of Bristol, has let me
" know no wants, feel no cares. The au-
" diences, before whom I have been used to
" appear,—my fellow performers,---the ma-
" nagers,

" nagers,---all have contributed to make me
" happy. My dear old Mr. KEASBERRY
" has been a second father to me; Mr. DI-
" MOND a true friend: and let me now de-
" clare, that the hearts and characters of
" these two most respectable men would add
" honour to any situation upon earth. I
" leave them, I leave you; and, about my
" success in London I have a thousand fears;
" nor can I reflect upon the subject without
" feeling a terror I am unable to express.
" Yet I have much to comfort me: The li-
" beral disposition of the patentee of Covent-
" Garden is greatly in my favour; and when
" it is known that I struggle to lay up a pro-
" vision for a beloved father's age, and to
" enable the rest of my little flock to earn a
" reputable livelihood, my cause will, in
" some degree, become that of the Public;
" for wherever an English audience assem-
" ble, indulgence and generosity will be the
" prevailing sentiments. How great the bless-
" ing to have been born in a country, where,
" to stand in need of protection, is the
" strongest recommendation towards obtain-
" ing it; where, to be a helpless female, is

" (if

" (if that female knows how to respect her-
" self) assured safety!

" I am, next winter, on an immense scale,
" to try my humble powers; your good
" wishes will, I hope, always surround me;
" and, believe me, I shall never cease to re-
" member you. What return can I make
" for all your goodness? This, and this
" only,---To endeavour, by my conduct, to
" shew that I am too proud of your favour-
" able opinion ever to forfeit it by any base
" or dishonourable action. This, I am con-
" vinced, will give you the highest pleasure
" noble minds are capable of, when they
" think on those they have assisted; and it
" is, generally speaking, the only method
" by which humble gratitude can prove it's
" sincerity.

" Accept my thanks, but spare me pain
" of bidding you FAYEWELL!"

There was a reasonable ground to imagine, that Miss WALLIS would have augmented here the fame acquired in the country, and that the Theatre would have experienced the advantages of her engagement—but the contrary

trary has actually happened. She has 18l. per week, and beyond her first night certainly has never drawn an audience.

The cause of this is now to be investigated, and it may oddly enough be traced up to her virtues. This young lady has still living a father, who with the most affecting evidence of her goodness has the most extravagant idea of her powers. Through the magnifying mist of his panegyric they are distended to the proportions of beings beyond humanity.

Far be it from this writer to blame the excesses of parental love; they are sometimes unavoidable and always pardonable; but they kill the plant it is their delight and effort to foster. Truth is so seldom heard, as neutrality is never suffered to approach; and astonishment is driven to unnatural excuses when the applauded object fails to produce in others the sensations felt by the fond relative or the partial friend.

If Miss WALLIS had been less praised, whether she might have obtained so large a salary may be doubted; but she would have got and secured a less envied situation; one where her powers would have had leisure to

matriculate, and her influence on the public been progressive. Now when the night has disappointed the promise of the morning, when the stage has belied the certainty of the parlour, what are we to say? Inequalities are the lot of all. So is error. When the voice is monotonous and broken, and the action exhibits only flutter and extravagance, then indeed we lament the delusions of love, and the want of friends less enchanted.

When this is stated, let us also remark what natural cause may have co-operated with this mistaken kindness. Miss WALLIS has a mind of much sensibility, and all the misfortunes of her family affect her in the most poignant manner. She lost a beloved brother in the navy, and her spirits seldom fling off the impression of this event.

We are now to give what is believed to be an accurate, and is felt to be a candid idea of her qualities as an actress. Her countenance is pallid, but her features are regular, and her eye is clear and marking. Her figure strikes every spectator as delicate in proportion; and her manners are gentle and graceful, the effect of good temper and good breeding. Her voice

voice fails the most—it is not sound in tone; and when she speaks with much energy, is either hoarse and unmusical, or broken and inarticulate. She injures her declamation by one repeated cadence, seemingly caught from a Scottish preceptor, as it is utterly unlike that of either the English or the Irish. She begins high, and gradually descends. The first words have in course an improper elevation, and the last are lost in a guttural gulph.

But if her recitation be thus defective, her action is easy, firm, and picturesque; her arms oftener repose than is now usual; and she seeks little after practised starts and constrained attitudes. In comedy she is a perfect gentlewoman, and exhibits no sign that she has changed the drawing-room for the stage. In tragedy, if the character be simple and artless, the actress is so too, but though she have a *soul* for the grand, that is all she brings to it; and the frame swells in vain with disproportioned strength and limbs not at all majestic. Her *Juliet* is in some scenes excellent, so is her *Imogen*. *Deserted love*, *plaintive melancholy*, and soft friendship, she can delineate justly: all beyond these nature has denied, and art will scarcely supply them.

As no doubt was entertained of Miss WALLIS's pre-eminence, she did not see until lately other actresses her contemporaries. She feared to imitate their manner, and thus lost the advantage of bettering her own? If REYNOLDS were to refuse to read SHERIDAN for fear of altering his style, would not the world be apt to think him senseless or insane? GENIUS can benefit by genius, without the servility of copy. And now it may be necessary to anticipate, as far as our judgment goes, the future progress of this lady. She will certainly in time, by experience, learn to limit her efforts—every thing will no more be attempted, and greater excellence will consequently be acquired; yet in tragedy she will hardly be better than she now is, though in comedy much more may be done, it is the proper sphere of her abilities, and she may there become a star of considerable magnitude.

MRS. CLENDINING.

COVENT-GARDEN.

MRS. CLENDINING is not, as is generally supposed, a native of Ireland. She was born at Stourhead in Wiltshire, the romantic and magnificent seat of the HOARES, where her family, that of Arnold, have resided for a century, in credit and respectability. Her father received his musical education in the choir at Salisbury. When a boy he attracted the attention of the late Duke of York, who expressed his approbation of his talents, and offered to send him to Italy for improvement; but his friends, for some family reasons, did not accept of His Royal Highness's liberality. He was the friend of NORRIS, who knew and admired his abilities, and the principal support of Doctor LINLEY's concerts, some

twenty-five years since at Bath. His voice and science obtained this eulogium from TENDUCCI, then in the high tide of public applause, "That he was the best *English singer* and master he had ever heard." He was drawn by an advantageous and encreasing appointment, from a lucrative situation in the choir at Wells, to the Cathedral in Dublin, which he did not enjoy entirely two years, dying, to the great regret of those who knew him, at the early age of twenty-nine. In this short period between his departure from Wells and his decease, he cultivated his daughter's voice, which at that early age became remarkable. With her father, who, in his partiality for her opening talents, talked of retiring to Italy to perfect them, vanished all hopes of her ever becoming a professional singer, and it was not until nine years after that her mother, by the persuasion of some friends, permitted her (after a few preparatory lessons) to sing at the Rotunda. Her voice was highly approved of, and the directors of the charity were not parsimonious in their reward of it, as, independent of her salary, they allowed her to take a benefit, which we cannot but suppose to have been extremely

tremely productive, as it was under the particular patronage of the Duchess of RUTLAND, then lady lieutenant. Before the season expired, she intermarried with Mr. CLENDINING, who had just completed his indentures as a surgeon, and who, in addition to his professional emoluments, was possessed of a handsome landed property in the County of Longford. The gentlemen who conducted the amusements at the Rotunda offered her much more advantageous terms for the ensuing season, but here the authority and pride of the husband interfered, and Mr. C. declared "that *his* wife should never sing for hire in public." The six following years of her life were engrossed by domestic duties, and it is owing to unexpected events that she has ever appeared as a public singer. Mr. CLENDINING's circumstances, partly from professional inattention, but principally from that *indiscriminate* hospitality, which is generally the cause of the pecuniary difficulties of the gentlemen of the sister kingdom, became much embarrassed, and his distress terminated in his imprisonment. In this moment of difficulty, Mrs. C. had but one resource for preserving her hus-

husband and young family from the consequences of poverty, her voice, and that has luckily proved a successful one. From some remains of the pride of former situation, and from a conviction that the London stamp of approbation could alone give currency to her vocal pretensions, she did not offer the first essay of her theatrical talents to the country which adopted her. With a few guineas in her pocket she arrived in London, in the middle of December, 1791. Chance had introduced her to Mrs. BILLINGTON, during one of that lady's summer excursions to Dublin, and Mrs. B. who had heard of, or perceived her embarrassments, had often endeavoured to persuade her, but in vain, to come to England. Upon her arrival she informed Mrs. B. of it, who immediately flew to her, and insisted upon her accepting the protection of her roof, until she was in some way provided for. After a fortnight's repose from the fatigues of her journey, Mrs. CLENDINING, impatient to put her design into execution, waited upon Dr. LINLEY, and made herself known to him. The Doctor had not even the curiosity to hear her, "he had no leisure for instruction," and after

after some compliments from Mrs. LINLEY to her father's talents, and the offer of refreshments, she was dismissed. At Covent Garden they had no occasion for her, and at Vauxhall their arrangements for the season were finally made. Thus had her hopes, as she conceived, experienced at the outset a chilling and fatal blast. Mrs. BILLINGTON, with that zealousness of friendship, and warmth of good nature, which so strongly characterize her, and which are as much to be admired as the finest voice and finest face that ever enthralled the heart or "took the soul prisoner," strove to support her spirits, and pressed her to continue under her roof until some opportunity of her being employed should offer.—About this time some one suggesting "Bath," with a few letters of introduction and a liberal proof of Mrs. BILLINGTON's regard, she went down there in the latter end of February, 1793. She was introduced by ASHE, the celebrated flute player, to RAUZZINI, who did justice to her merit, gave her the most flattering hopes of success, and immediately took her under his tuition. Her first appearance at Bath was at a concert for ASHE's benefit.—

Previous

Previous to it her history had been circulated, and her misfortunes and motives for adopting a new life had become generally known. —— When she appeared in the orchestra, she was saluted by a burst of the most encouraging applause; when it subsided she endeavoured to begin, but in vain; the applause recommenced, and her embarrassment encreased. Her reception, her former situation, and her fears, operated too forciby upon her feelings, and after repeated attempts she was forced to descend from the orchestra. A considerable time elapsed before she re-appeared. At length recovered from her feelings, and cheered and encouraged, she began the ballad of "Auld Robin Gray," which RAUZZINI had taught her. She had scarce time to finish the first verse, before her exertions were approved, and rewarded by the most universal plaudits and *bravos*, and at the conclusion of the song it was unanimously encored. Next day the gentlemen of the Catch Club engaged her for their concerts, and she continued to sing at them for the remainder of the season, rapidly improving under the tuition of the worthy RAUZZINI. At the musical festival at the Abbey Church, she

she sung, "He was despised," from the Messiah, a counter-tenor song, with such tone, expression, and steadiness, as to excite the wonder and approbation, not only of the amateurs, but of the professional judges, and we believe it was on the report and recommendation of one of these gentlemen Mr. SARJANT, whose judgment is only to be excelled by his unparalleled performance, that Mr. LEWIS wrote to her that if she came to London, he would be glad to see her at the theatre. Though the season at Bath was now nearly expired, and the visitors daily retiring, yet a concert for her benefit was proposed. A committee of gentlemen undertook the trouble and direction of it, and the Mayor wrote to an Irish peer, under the protection of whose family she more particularly was, that "as a mark of respect to his lordship and his "protegee" she would be accommodated with the use of the elegant *town hall*, free of all expence, for her concert." Of a benefit *thus* patronized the profits were very considerable, and they were well employed, for, with the exception of a few pounds, the amount was remitted to Ireland, and with some other assistance, effected the liberation of her husband, and enabled him

him to join her in London some few months after.

In the month of June she came to London, and was introduced to Mr. HARRIS; after a few specimens of her abilities, she was offered terms, which were not immediately accepted, because "she was apprehensive she could never succeed on the stage; she had no experience of the stage, having seen but few plays; she had no inclination for it, and she was sure she never could acquire sufficient *confidence* to speak on it." However Mr. HARRIS's address overcame her objections, and she entered into an engagement for three years. Mr. SHIELD, who had heard her, immediately set himself to compose for her. Her *first appearance on the stage* was in the part of *Clara in Hartford Bridge*, on *Saturday November* 3d, 1792. Her first song was universally encored, and her reputation as a singer immediately confirmed. The depth and fulness of her middle and lower tones, and the sweetness of the upper ones were acknowledged and admired, and all the public prints were unanimous and warm in their approbation of her. *Rosina*, *Clara* in the *Duenna*, and the first characters in various new and stock operas

operas were played by her in the course of the season with encreasing applause.

She has been for the last two years a widow, her husband having died in April 1793, a surgeon of one of his Majesty's ships of war.—In private life she is respected and esteemed by those who know her, and is honoured with the patronage and *intimacy* of many families of the first respectability.

Miss ARNE.

DRURY-LANE.

THIS lady is the daughter of the late Mr. MICHAEL ARNE, who was married to Miss WRIGHT, formerly of Drury-Lane Theatre. She was designed by her father for Oratorio and Concert Singing, and he had instructed her for that branch of the profession till his death, which happened after a long and tedious illness, when she was very young.—During his indisposition Miss ARNE attended closely, and her extreme anxiety for the preservation of her father's life rendering her regardless of her own health, she, by the closeness of her confinement, contracted a disorder in the glands of her throat, which destroyed her voice. She was in consequence obliged to confine herself to instrumental teaching, till about three years ago, when finding

ing her voice in a great measure restored, her friends placed her under Mr. LINLEY, with whom she had not been long engaged before she was deprived of those advantages she might have acquired from so celebrated a master, by his painful indisposition.

However, under these inauspicious circumstances, with but little instruction in stage-singing, and none in acting or speaking, and without even a rehearsal, she made her appearance in *Polly* in the *Beggar's Opera*, in February 1795, and was received with flattering plaudits, and with that liberality and candour, ever the characteristic of a London audience. She is evidently very timid, to rub of which we understand she has engaged with the Margate Manager for the summer season. Her salary at Drury-Lane Theatre is three pounds per week and part of a benefit.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM